

**Ethiopia and the beginnings of the UNESCO World Heritage programme 1960-  
1980**

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In der Arbeit wird die historische Genese des UNESCO Welterbe-Programms zwischen 1960 und 1980 untersucht, insbesondere im Hinblick auf die Rolle der sogenannten Entwicklungsländer in diesem Prozess. Die UNESCO engagierte sich in vielen dieser Länder im Bereich des Kultur- und Naturschutzes, zu einem Zeitpunkt an dem der Aufbau eines nationalen Erbes für diese Länder von besonderer Bedeutung war. Die Schlüsselkonzepte des Welterbediskurses: Nationales Erbe, Denkmalpflege und Humanität, sind europäischen Ursprungs und westlicher Natur. In Bezug auf die Entwicklungsländer gestaltete sich die Etablierung eines nationalen Erbes und die Konstruktion eines historischen Narratives in den meisten Fällen als Zusammenarbeit zwischen internationalen Experten und nationalen politischen Eliten. Außerdem galt vielen der involvierten Akteure Kulturtourismus in Entwicklungsländern, angeregt durch Altertümer und wilde Natur, als entscheidende Einnahmequelle für Devisen. Identifikation, Institutionalisierung und Ausübung von Denkmalpflege zu finanzieren war vielfach Bestandteil von Entwicklungshilfeprogrammen und Äthiopien ist ein besonders anschauliches Beispiel für diese Praxis. Die Welterbekonvention wurde in Äthiopien ab 1977 mit großem Erfolg umgesetzt, gleichzeitig jedoch herrschte ein Mangel an entsprechend ausgebildeten Fachkräften – Archäologen, Denkmalpfleger oder Kunsthistoriker – im Land um die Vorhaben tatsächlich umzusetzen. Das wirtschaftliche Potential von Kulturtourismus wurde als vielversprechend gelobt und Gelder für Denkmalpflege und Artenschutz wurden teilweise nur unter der Prämisse der touristischen Erschließung bereitgestellt. Äthiopiens Rolle in der Entstehungsphase des Welterbe-Programms ermöglicht es, die komplexen Prozesse der Wissensproduktion und Politisierung zu verstehen, die den Welterbe-Diskurs so maßgeblich prägen.

This dissertation looks into the historic genesis of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme, and gives a special relevance to the role of so-called developing countries in this. UNESCO was highly active in the field of conservation in these countries at a time that the establishment and promotion of a national heritage was perceived desirable by them.

National heritage, conservation and humanitarianism – key concepts promoted in the World Heritage discourse – are European in their origin and Western in their nature. In the context of so-called developing countries, the establishment of a nation's heritage was often a hybrid effort of international experts and national political elites, serving evolving national narratives. On a more concrete level, many actors involved saw cultural tourism, stimulated by monuments and wildlife, as a crucial source of foreign currency for these countries. Funding the identification and institutionalisation of heritage, and the conservation and management of heritage sites, was a practise occurring within and alongside other forms of technical assistance and developmental aid. Ethiopia provides a particular vivid example of these events.

Ethiopia implemented the World Heritage Convention in 1977, with great effort and success. At the same time, the country was confronted with a skills-shortage crisis, due to there being at that time few native Ethiopian archaeologists, conservators, or art historians. The economic potential of heritage tourism in Ethiopia was appreciated early on and funds for conservation were sometimes raised entirely based upon the argument that the conservation of monuments would foster tourism, and development.

Understanding the links between Ethiopia and the World Heritage programme during its initial phase provides insights into the complex processes of knowledge production, and politics, that constitutes the World Heritage discourse.

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## List of Abbreviations

ARCCH	Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage
CFEE	Centre français des études éthiopiennes
CNRS	Centre national de la recherche scientifique
CRCCH	Centre for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage
DG	Director-General
EAL	Ethiopian Airlines
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EEC	European Economic Community
ETO	Ethiopian Tourist Organisation
EWCA	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
EWCO	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FIJET	Federation Internationale du Journalistes et Ecrivains du Travail
HSI	Haile Selassie I University
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOM	International Council on Museums
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IES	Institute for Ethiopian Studies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITB	Internationale Tourismus-Börse
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
IUOTO	International Union of Travel Organisations
NALE	National Library and Archive
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSF	National Science Foundation
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies
TPLF	Tigrayan People's Liberation Front
TWA	Trans World Airlines
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	UN World Tourism Organisation
UPU	Universal Postal Union
UWAS	UNESCO World Art Series
WHO	World Health Organisation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

# Introduction

In March 1978, Firouz Bagherzadeh, Director-General (DG) of the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, arrived in Ethiopia on a mission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). He was tasked with assisting the Ethiopian government in “drawing-up of a list of outstanding sites and monuments to be presented for inclusion in the World Heritage List”.<sup>1</sup> Bagherzadeh was an excellent choice. Chosen by the Iranian government to act as a delegate to the newly formed World Heritage Committee, he had then been elected as the Committee’s Director during its first session in 1977.<sup>2</sup> With many governments struggling at the time with the preparation of their World Heritage nominations, Bagherzadeh had been engaged in a chain of similar missions in the weeks before landing in Ethiopia. His stay there proved to be productive time. Soon after, in June 1978, eleven completed nominations were submitted on behalf of Ethiopia, more than any other state. However, the credit was not Firouz Bagherzadeh’s alone. Upon arrival in Addis Ababa, he collaborated not only with very receptive and engaged Ethiopian authorities, but also with the well-embedded local United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office, which was in fact responsible for several heritage conservation projects in Ethiopia by the time. These projects, benefiting from Bagherzadeh’s expert assistance, had already received significant finance through development aid. The Ethiopian World Heritage nominations, in a way, were the continuation of an international effort to develop the country’s heritage.

Why was the conservation of heritage considered in certain contexts to be a development activity? And why was it so difficult for some governments to produce World Heritage nominations, so that they required assistance?

The World Heritage List was one of the goals defined in the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (World Heritage Convention) that was adopted by UNESCO in 1972. The convention started out as just one of many instruments to implement UNESCO’s mission in the field of culture and science. Today, the World Heritage Convention is among the few international treaties to be almost universally ratified, and related activities are considered a flagship-programme of UNESCO, ensuring a powerful continuity of UNESCO’s mandate, and elevating heritage conservation to unforeseen political relevance. Despite the broad acceptance, World Heritage is confronted

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Berhanu Abebe to Percy Stulz, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 (100) A 218.

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, First Session, Unesco, Paris, 27 June- 1 July 1977, WHC CC.77/CONF.001/09.



with strong criticism questioning the balanced representation of the List, the impact of the nominations on local communities and, most critically, the increasing dynamics of conflict surrounding World Heritage sites. The considerable international attention that World Heritage sites receive has been increasingly used and abused in political conflicts over the last fifteen years. In turn World Heritage Committee meetings have become a highly politicised global arena and World Heritage sites transformed into politically charged, symbolic places.<sup>3</sup> UNESCO's World Heritage Centre today, while acknowledging perhaps the level of power and political instrumentalisation reached by this point, insists on a neutral role in the global heritage-making process.<sup>4</sup> Yet, from the beginning UNESCO had a politicised approach to heritage and conservation, positioning itself in the early years in political conflicts in Egypt (1956), the Arab-Israeli War (1967) and the Indochina War (1946-54), on the apparent behalf of monuments, but inevitably taking sides in the political conflicts as well.<sup>5</sup> In short, it can be said that heritage has long been identified as a highly political global arena and the foundations for this critical dimension have been laid in the 1960s, along with UNESCO's early engagement in international conservation efforts.

While research has begun to look into the historic genesis of the concept of universal heritage that informed the World Heritage Programme, and the institutional history of the Programme within the sphere of UNESCO, very little attention has been given to the role of so-called developing countries in the beginnings of the Programme, when in fact UNESCO was highly active in the field of conservation in these countries in the two decades leading up to the first inscriptions to the World Heritage List. The story of the Ethiopian World Heritage sites in the years between 1960 and 1980 is illustrative of the manner in which the World Heritage Programme owes its politicised character to the character of its involvement in these developing countries and to the fact that it started as a development activity.

Ethiopia is exemplary of many so-called developing countries that perceived the establishment and promotion of a national heritage as particularly desirable at the time, illu-

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<sup>3</sup> Christoph Brumann, "Imagining the Ground from Afar: Why the Sites Are so Remote in the World Heritage Committee Sessions," in *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives*, ed. Christoph Brumann and David Berliner (New York ; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016), 309-14; Marc Askew, "The Magic List of Global Status: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Agendas of States," in *Heritage and Globalisation*, ed. Sophia Labadi and Colin Long (New York: Routledge, 2010), 38-40.

<sup>4</sup> In an attempt to make the process as transparent as possible, and to reinforce the Centre's role as a knowledge producing authority in the World Heritage Programme, a map of all World Heritage sites has been published from 1998 on, and an extensive list with an interactive map and detailed documentation (down to the original decision-making documents) are available online under "UNESCO World Heritage Centre - World Heritage List," accessed October 28, 2017, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>.

<sup>5</sup> Sagarika Dutt, *The Politicization of the United Nations Specialized Agencies: A Case Study of UNESCO* (Lewiston, N.Y: Mellen University Press, 1995), 61, 62, 93, 94, 103, 104.

minating the vigorous politicisation of heritage in processes of nation-building that happened at times of widespread political change. The Ethiopian example is peculiar since the country was considered a role model for development cooperation, by both other developing countries and by United Nations (UN) agencies, and it benefited from an image of exceptionalism that was eminently connected to Ethiopia national heritage. These features allow an examination of the implementation of the international policies on the ground, and to draw general findings from a rich and diverse body of evidence. Based on sources from the archives of Ethiopian and international organisations, academic and government publications, tourism promotional material and press coverage, my project tells, in equal parts, the history of Ethiopian national heritage and that of the World Heritage Programme.

In a first step I will briefly explain some background information about the key concepts and issues regarding UNESCO World Heritage and the background in Ethiopia. In engaging with the existing body of literature and research as well as more fundamental theoretical works regarding the issues of heritage and development, I will outline my hypothesis and the key terminology of my project more clearly. The main body of my work will begin with an explanation of how “the international” was materialised in the developing world through the idea of a universal heritage, and then characterise the interaction between UNESCO and the Ethiopian administration in the period between 1960 and 1980. Following this, I will demonstrate that UNESCO was already substantially involved in heritage-making in Ethiopia prior to the start of the World Heritage Programme in 1978, and explain the manner in which heritage-making in Ethiopia was a highly politicised field during the period from 1960 to 1980. Lastly, I will prove that heritage-making in Ethiopia was fundamentally enabled by being placed in the service of tourism as an engine for development.

## **Key concepts and literature review**

Today Ethiopia has nine World Heritage Sites<sup>6</sup>: the Simien Mountains National Park, the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela, the medieval fortress Fasil Ghebbi in Gondar, the ruins of the ancient city of Aksum, the monolithic stone monuments in Tiya, the Lower Valley of the Awash and the Lower Valley of the Omo, vast and remote landscapes which are hard to access and contain some of the richest sites of paleontological remains, among them the oldest known humanoid fossils. Two more sites, the fortified Historic Town of

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<sup>6</sup> “Ethiopia,” UNESCO World Heritage Centre, accessed October 28, 2017, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/et/>.

Harar Jugol, and Konso Cultural Landscape were nominated after the period of interest in this project, in 1994.

Nine is not a high number, compared to the overall number of cultural and natural heritage sites in a country as rich in history and natural scenery as Ethiopia. Nor is it a high number of heritage sites for one country, if one looks to the World Heritage List of 2017, in which several countries have more than forty sites listed. Yet, there is something noteworthy about the Ethiopian World Heritage sites. Most of them were submitted for nomination to the World Heritage Committee at the very first round of submissions in June 1978. In comparison, no other country submitted as many as Ethiopia. This makes Ethiopian World Heritage an unlikely story worth exploring.

Why unlikely? Conservation according to World Heritage standards required extensive formal prerequisites, but, despite possessing an enormous stock of potential heritage sites, the institutional and legal infrastructure in Ethiopia itself at the time was not sufficiently developed to meet these prerequisites. The explanation for how Ethiopia then came to be able to meet these prerequisites serves as an illuminating case study.

My primary objective is to examine the role of so-called developing countries in the genesis phase of the World Heritage Programme, in order to show the politicising effect caused by UNESCO enacting heritage-making as a development activity in Ethiopia, and other developing countries. More specifically, I want to look at the situation in Ethiopia from 1960-1980 with a focus on the operational level, where individuals interacted internationally in an institutional or organisational context to implement UNESCO's programmes and agreements in a national context. Furthermore, I want to follow the evolution of the World Heritage Programme since the founding of UNESCO in 1945 to 1980, and the discursive and practical West-Development-Nexus in it, and examine the perspectives of different levels and actors.

Writing a history that connects the actions of individuals, and the evolution of international institutions and programmes across the globe, with the national history of a country, necessarily demands an analytical perspective that opens up an inclusive methodological framework of "a history of equal terms, in which any actor from anywhere in the world is regarded as having equal validity",<sup>7</sup> *a priori*. Some argue that this can be conceptual history, while others argue to focus on the processual quality and connections, so as to not depend on the linear view of dominating narratives that demand a beginning and

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<sup>7</sup> Hagen Schulz-Forberg, "The Spatial and Temporal Layers of Global History: A Reflection on Global Conceptual History through Expanding Reinhart Koselleck's Zeitschichten into Global Spaces," *Die räumlichen und zeitlichen Schichten der Globalgeschichte: Überlegungen zu einer globalen Begriffsgeschichte anhand der Ausweitung von Reinhart Kosellecks Zeitschichten in globale Räume*. 38, no. 4 (December 2013): 41.

an end, a winner and a loser.<sup>8</sup> Whether the perspective is labelled as international, global or transnational—looking at concepts that structured several versions of new world orders suggested during the twentieth century might well remain one of the most important duties of historians for the following years.<sup>9</sup>

Both of the central topics of my thesis, development and heritage, share as a key component of their discursive and practical quality, the feature of being commonplace terms with a very broad spectrum of meaning, a feature that makes it difficult to use them as empirical categories. In order to achieve a workably narrow and clear definition of the terms in the context of my thesis project, I will outline the ideas and theories informing the discourse and practice of development and heritage which were most relevant for the actors and situations presented in my project, thus contributing to the conceptual history of two key terms of the twentieth century.<sup>10</sup>

## Decolonisation and the first UN Development Decade

The historical study of international organisations has become a growing interest and multifaceted effort in recent years, yet monographic works on individual organisations are scarce, studies that could synthesise case studies and the overwhelming archival sources into a thoughtful history. This is despite the fact that there is an urgent need for these kinds of works. All of the international organisations that form part of this study have initiated and published their own historiographies, and while the inside-view and the linear narration of events is helpful for studying them, these works all lack an observational distance, as they focus on achievements, milestones and key actors rather than providing a general analysis and linking themselves to broader debates within the disci-

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<sup>8</sup> A good general overview and methodological discussion is provided by Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Flughöhe der Adler: historische Essays zur globalen Gegenwart* (München: C.H. Beck, 2017); Sebastian Conrad, Andreas Eckert, and Ulrike Freitag, *Globalgeschichte. Theorien, Ansätze, Themen* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> One recent example of a project dissecting a conceptual and connected history of a key term is Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* (London: Allen Lane, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Projects like the *Dictionary of Transnational History* are important, but the field of non-nationstate-confined history is lacking a designated anthology exploring the discursive dimension of key terms in short essays, in the style of *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck, *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon Zur Politisch-Sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972). Martin J. Burke provides a concise overview of the debates and argues for the renewed efforts of using conceptual history for theory-building in contemporary historiography, Martin J. Burke, "An Embarrassment of Virtual Riches: Writing Histories of Concepts in a Digital Age," in *Begriffs-, Ideen- und Problemgeschichte im 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Riccardo Pozzo and Marco Sgarbi (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), 81–92.

pline of history.<sup>11</sup> In this they are in effect producing a kind of inter- and intra-organisational mythology in an attempt to sanction anecdotal evidence as empirical basis. Chloe Maurel's work on the first thirty years of UNESCO's existence is one such example of an independent scholarly effort, linking the somewhat well preserved history of philosophical concepts underpinning the organisation's founding process, with a more practical and political history of the organisation, an approach that is necessary for following the evolution and implementation of World Heritage as well.<sup>12</sup>

The term "development" found its way into the official language and policies of the UN through the decolonisation debate taking place in the UN system during the years 1948-50.<sup>13</sup> In the founding years of the UN (1945-47), the central ideas underpinning the development discourse of the decades to follow were already prevailing. The concept of raising and levelling standards of living on a global scale was part of the UN founding charter<sup>14</sup>, and was inspired by two main concerns and experiences. Firstly, European post-war reconstruction planning formed part and parcel of the early years of the UN. Many US experts demanded measures that would guide the emerging post-war states of Western Europe into economic cooperation so as to ensure the most efficient overall allocation of resources. This sort of thinking and procedure seemed indispensable for a fast and efficient reconstruction. Secondly, this efficiency paradigm was based on an overall technocratic thinking that had extended its reach into the economic sphere, and which became prominent during the financial strains of both world wars. Technical interna-

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<sup>11</sup> The main works of this kind used for reference in the following study are Jukka Jokilehto and ICCROM, *ICCROM and the Conservation of Cultural Heritage: A History of the Organization's First 50 Years, 1959-2009* (Rome, Italy: ICCROM, 2011); Fernando Valderrama Martínez, *A History of UNESCO* (Paris: UNESCO Pub., 1995); Michel Conil-Lacoste, *The Story of a Grand Design: Unesco 1946-1993: People, Events, and Achievements* (Paris: Unesco Pub., 1994); Martin W Holdgate and IUCN, *The Green Web: A Union for World Conservation* (Cambridge, England; London: IUCN, the World Conservation Union; Earthscan, 1999); Christina Cameron and Mechtild Rössler, *Many Voices, One Vision: The Early Years of the World Heritage Convention, Heritage, Culture and Identity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013). In all these works, the early decades of the international conservation discourse, are recounted as rather self-referential historiographies and lean towards glorifying conservation as an undisputed noble undertaking. They leave little room for reflections on the constructed nature of the heritage discourse and the implications of the universal claim. The gap between the historywriting of the conservationists' field and critical heritage studies (see discussion and literature review below) is both remarkable and sad, and it would be desirable if more works took a critical and observant approach regarding the context of actors and decision making.

<sup>12</sup> Chloé Maurel, *Histoire de l'UNESCO: Les Trente Premières Années, 1945 - 1974* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010); a more general approach to international organisations as subjects of historical research: Akira Iriye, *Global Community. The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Madeleine Herren-Oesch, *Internationale Organisationen seit 1865: eine Globalgeschichte der internationalen Ordnung* (Darmstadt: WissBuchges, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> For a history of the term development see: Albert Sanghoon Park, "Does the Development Discourse Learn from History?," *World Development* 96 (n.d.): 52-64; for an overview of the UN-System and development see: Amy L. S. Staples, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food And Agriculture Organization, And World Health Organization Have Changed the World, 1945-1965*, annotated edition edition (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2006); Olav Stokke, *The UN and Development: From Aid to Cooperation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); and the review of the most recent literature in: Marc Frey and Sönke Kunkel, "Writing the History of Development: A Review of the Recent Literature," *Contemporary European History*, no. 2 (2011): 215.

<sup>14</sup> § 55, "Charter of the United Nations," August 10, 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/charte-united-nations/>.

tionalism became a new political action framework that looked towards social engineering and interventionist economic policies as a pathway to prosperity.<sup>15</sup>

The notion of underdevelopment quickly diversified into the distinction between economic weakness as a consequence of war, and the more structural weakness that resulted from colonisation. The debates surrounding the increasing instability and difficulties of European colonial politics were important conceptual building blocks for the particular concept of development that was destined to become a major concern of the UN. The initial concepts of development as reconstruction effort, and development as technical solution to social problems, thereafter provided a connection “between the economies of European reconstruction and the geography of colonial development”<sup>16</sup>—a connection that was of great importance for the discourse and practice of development.

In effect, the debates around the economic situation of colonies steered towards a direction that saw the incorporation of development into the UN mandate as a supposedly apolitical task under the control of the countries which self-identified as under-developed, with the intention of avoiding renewed exploitation of under-developed countries to the advantage of the providing states. In the process of decolonisation, numerous new states joined the UN System—32 up to the beginning of the 1960s—causing the UN to undergo a metamorphosis during this decade, when the so-called developing countries gained a majority representation in the UN General Assembly and presented, for a short period at least, a “Third World bloc” that acted as an “alternative ‘we’ to both imperial incorporation and national separation”.<sup>17</sup> This new majority pushed for a programmatic shift towards development as empowerment and as a major responsibility of the international community, arguing that supposed under-development had been utilized as a core justification for ongoing colonial occupation during the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>18</sup> According to this new understanding of development, the UN was supposed to provide mainly technical and request-driven assistance through their specialised agencies and replace the earlier top-down and donor-driven aid programmes.

It is within this framework that the notion of development as a predominantly economic enterprise was conceived, and visions of the future shifted from technocratic, social-engineering solutions towards an idea that providing funds and knowledge would

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<sup>15</sup> Gilbert Rist, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, 3. ed. (London: Zed Books, 2008), 88–92; Daniel Speich Chassé, “Technical Internationalism and Economic Development at the Founding Moment of the UN System,” in *International Organizations and Development 1945–1990*, ed. Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel, and Corinna R Unger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 30–32.

<sup>16</sup> Speich Chassé, “Technical,” 34, 35.

<sup>17</sup> Frederick Cooper, “Writing the History of Development,” *Journal of Modern European History* 8, no. 1 (2010): 17; Maurel, *Histoire*, 141, 142.

<sup>18</sup> Kevin O’Sullivan, “A ‘Global Nervous System’: The Rise and Rise of European Humanitarian NGOs, 1945–1989,” in *International Organizations and Development, 1945–1990*, ed. Marc Frey, Sönke Kunkel, and Corinna R Unger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 204.

help the states “develop” solutions by themselves. This notion would dominate development policies and actions for the following decades. After 1955 there were no specialised agencies or organisations in the UN system whose programmes were not permeated in some way with the concern for economic development. Some, like the World Bank, simply turned into development agencies.<sup>19</sup> Others contributed to relevant policy making within their areas of specialisation. Correspondingly, in 1961, the UN resolution officially announced the upcoming decade to be the *first development decade*, setting the tone for discourse and practice in the years to come.

Following the resolution on “Technical Assistance for Economic Development” in 1966, the UNDP was founded in an attempt to merge existing development programmes and to streamline and prioritise the UN assistance programmes according to the new development paradigm. The UNDP was supposed to act in a coordinating role, distributing existing funds among the UN specialised agencies, as well as running separate programmes specific to more acute concerns. Nearly all UN activity in the new developing countries of the global south practically became the domain of UNDP.<sup>20</sup> The development decade resulted in a large-scale expansion of a global development-industry, as the UN resolutions managed to function as a model framework for existing initiatives. The idea of a need for long-term projects, as opposed to punctual relief operations, was cross-fertilised with existing bilateral development cooperation and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) efforts and sparked a veritable explosion of the sector from the 1960s onwards.<sup>21</sup>

However, a gap between the idea and the reality of development had existed from its inception. Development efforts were always connected to geopolitical realities and interests as well as softer forms of hegemonic realities, such as cultural norms and political ideas. In reality, it would remain a conceptual challenge for technical assistance programmes to shed technocratic and paternalistic ideologies and overcome the inherent structural hegemony of the very concept of technical assistance. This was and still is especially true for the attitude of development experts and their work on the ground. Hubertus Büschel and Daniel Speich argue that development cooperation has to be analysed by combining the study of the concepts, institutions, and practices involved with the study of their implementation, meaning the activities and projects that took place as development efforts as well as the way the actors involved talked about it.<sup>22</sup> Historical studies followed this ap-

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<sup>19</sup> Michele Alacevich, *The Political Economy of the World Bank: The Early Years* (Stanford, Calif.; Washington, DC: Stanford Economics and Finance/Stanford University Press; World Bank, 2009).

<sup>20</sup> Craig N. Murphy, *The United Nations Development Programme: A Better Way?* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006), 78, 79.

<sup>21</sup> O’Sullivan, “Global,” 203–7.

<sup>22</sup> Hubertus Büschel and Daniel Speich, “Konjunkturen, Probleme und Perspektiven der Globalgeschichte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit,” in *Entwicklungswelten. Globalgeschichte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009), 9.

proach, with Martin Rempe's study of the development cooperation between the European Economic Community (EEC) and Senegal<sup>23</sup> further underlining its relevance, so as to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the power dynamics underpinning both the discourse and practice of development.

Mark Mazower showed that, contrary to the idealistic proclamations associated with the UN, there was an imperial impetus ingrained from the beginning in favour of installing, through the binding force of the UN system and its policies, mechanisms allowing certain politically dominant countries, in particular the USA, France and England, to secure control and dominance in the world order.<sup>24</sup> For over a decade, the development discourse gained such relevance as a concept that many other issues had to be integrated within it in order to win support, meaning that many actors had to adapt their language to the development paradigm.<sup>25</sup>

There was a strong strain of critical arguments in the development discourse from the beginning, questioning UN development policies and the general omnipresence of the development paradigm, and highlighting the problematic nature of the Western origin of the concept.<sup>26</sup> Arturo Escobar was one of the most controversial voices, and leaning on the writings of Edward Said and Franz Fanon, considered the development paradigm in the international system as a neo-colonial effort, identifying many of the same mechanisms and effects that had characterised colonial control.<sup>27</sup> This connects the history of the development discourse to a particular aspect of the study of international organisations, the role of experts and expert knowledge.

In fact, a key requirement for understanding international organisations is a recognition that they are knowledge-producing institutions with a structurally embedded hegemony, and by consequence so are the policies they create. In the study of international organisations, the role of experts, expert networks, and epistemic communities has long informed

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<sup>23</sup> Martin Rempe, *Entwicklung im Konflikt: die EWG und der Senegal, 1957 - 1975* (Köln: Böhlau, 2012).

<sup>24</sup> Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace. The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>25</sup> Andreas Eckert, "'We Are All Planners Now.' Planung Und Dekolonisation in Afrika," *Geschichte Und Gesellschaft*, 2008, 396.

<sup>26</sup> For example Rist, *History*; Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing Bureaucrats, Backward Africans, and the Development Concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 64-92; for a more recent state of the debate see: Emmanuel Kwaku Akyeampong, *Africa's Development in Historical Perspective* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>27</sup> Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012).



research.<sup>28</sup> International organisations were from the beginning not only political arenas or diplomatic stages, but also large-scale bureaucracies.<sup>29</sup> As bureaucratic institutions, international organisations derived much of their authority from expertise and operated on the basis of rules these experts had defined.<sup>30</sup> Since expert authority could function as a powerful force in making policies effective, international organisations sought out experts, and experts in turn sought to increase their influence by contributing to policies.<sup>31</sup> Experts fulfilled a crucial role as brokers and mediators between the local, national, and international spheres. Thus, much of my research was guided by attempting to trace individual experts.

With the growing number of international policies in play and the expansion of UNESCO's operations, the formal standards for international cooperation and assistance programmes became increasingly necessary and elaborate. Without the provision of basic information such as statistical data, detailed maps, and an economic and political analysis, it became increasingly difficult for developing countries, such as Ethiopia, to comply with the application requirements for aid and assistance requests. The lack of institutional and skilled manpower capacity was best demonstrated by the fact that for many development aid programmes it was foreseen that a government could initially apply to receive help with their proper applications. With many so-called developing countries joining the UN as new member states at that time, there was an imbalance between the increasingly elaborate bureaucratic expertise of the staff of the UN and their special agencies, and their counterparts in the governments and administration of the new states. This imbalance was a strong influence, and examining the connection between international organisations, governance,<sup>32</sup> and state formation is indispensable to a proper analysis of the im-

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<sup>28</sup> Peter M. Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization* 46, no. 1 (May 22, 2009): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818300001442>; Wolfram Kaiser, *Writing the Rules for Europe: Experts, Cartels, and International Organizations* / Wolfram Kaiser and Johan Schot, 1. publ. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Davide Rodogno, Bernhard Struck, and Jakob Vogel, *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks, and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015); Sandrine Kott, "International Organizations - A Field of Research for a Global History," *Internationale Ordnungen und neue Universalismen im 20. Jahrhundert International Orders and New Universalisms in the Twentieth Century*, *Zeithistorische Forschungen* = Studies in contemporary history, 8 (3/2011), no. Online-Ausgabe (2011), <http://www.zeithistorische-forschungen.de/site/40209174/default.aspx>.

<sup>29</sup> Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore, *Rules for the World: International Organizations in Global Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004); John G. Hadwen and Johan Kaufmann, *United Nations Decision Making*, 3., fully rev. ed (Alphen aan den Rijn: Sijthoff & Noordhoff, 1980); Jarle Trondal et al., *Unpacking International Organisations. The Dynamics of Compound Bureaucracies*, European Policy Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

<sup>30</sup> As Peter M. Haas explains, the knowledge based interpretation as a reaction to uncertainty, or, simply speaking, a set of problems a state actor sees itself confronted with, is essential to the creation of institutional solutions on a state and, in the case of the UN, inter-state level. Haas, "Introduction," 3-4; Maurel, *Histoire*, 261-75.

<sup>31</sup> Barnett and Finnemore, *Rules*, 25.

<sup>32</sup> The concept is understood here as a one that enables to connect analytically the perspective of actors and institutions, to understand how which structures and rules frame their interactions, Gunnar Folke Schuppert, *Verflochtene Staatlichkeit: Globalisierung als Governance-Geschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verl., 2014), 21, 22.

pact and emergence of global policies. International organisations, and the experts employed in their service, formed a global communication elite in control of information and knowledge about both their member states and about the organisations' inner workings as the top nodes of a "long distance network".<sup>33</sup> In Ethiopia in particular, where no frame of bureaucracy and administrative infrastructure had been left behind by a colonial power, this presented a significant obstacle towards the implementation of international assistance programmes. Building an administrative infrastructure was a key element of Haile Selassie I's imperial consolidation politics, and an important pillar of this strategy was the institutionalisation of education and research after the Western model. The Ethiopian case is exemplary of the huge scale of institutionalising Western knowledge production in so-called developing countries that started in the 1960s.

Experts were deemed indispensable and were requested by UNESCO as well as by the member states, tasked with ensuring the compatibility of developing countries for the development aid programmes, which in effect ensured the experts' hegemony. The scientific expertise commissioned by international organisations had a higher reputation than the expertise produced locally, because through their work experts produced the necessary data and rendered existing conditions into a language that could be computed by the operational guidelines of the international bureaucracies. This resulted in a specific, Western style of knowledge production, whether executed by Western or non-Western experts and considerably shaped the emerging bureaucratic infrastructure in many countries, ensuring that the power relations and the knowledge production related to the development discourse remained anchored in the North-Atlantic headquarters of the UN agencies.<sup>34</sup>

Even though there is no shortage of works undertaking a more general historical analysis of international organisations and more specifically the UN system, very few studies have looked into the work behind the scenes and into the bureaucratic and administrative conditions and into the offices of the staff of international organisations, to understand

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<sup>33</sup> Gunnar Folke Schuppert, *Wege in die moderne Welt: Globalisierung von Staatlichkeit als Kommunikationsgeschichte* (Frankfurt; New York: Campus Verlag, 2015), 39.

<sup>34</sup> I would argue that it is conceptually fuzzy who exactly can be considered a Western or non-Western expert. Most regularly, African elites with a European training were acting as cultural brokers, even though they were not necessarily regarded as such in Europe; see Martin Rempe, *Entwicklung*, 61, 239, 240; Philipp H. Lepenies, "Lernen Vom Besserwisser: Wissenstransfer in der 'Entwicklungshilfe' aus Historischer Perspektive," in *Entwicklungswelten. Globalgeschichte Der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, ed. Hubertus Büschel and Daniel Speich (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009), 49–54; Andrea Rehling, "Kosmopolitische Geschichtsschreibung und die Kosmopolitik des UNESCO Weltkultur- und Naturerbes," in *Bessere Welten: Kosmopolitismus in den Geschichtswissenschaften*, ed. Isabella Löhr and Bernhard Gißibl (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2017), 389–92; Rist, *History*, 74. Although it is fruitful to see them as a group, it is important to understand that expert communities are far from being homogenous, as the individuals in them have different backgrounds, motives, incentives and levels of agency. While I don't provide a detailed comparison of the biographical background of the experts, I came across Indian, Swiss, Polish, British conservators and education experts, all working in Ethiopia as "foreign experts". It would be enlightening, for example, to further investigate the colonial trajectories in the experts' biographies, meaning people who received expert status in a colonial context, regardless the provenance.

how this expert hegemony was produced and reproduced on a daily basis. The growth of the United Nations during the years of decolonisation also resulted in an imbalance between the increasingly elaborate bureaucratic structure and expertise of the staff of the UN, and their special agencies and their counterparts in the governments and administration of the new states. Examining the work of international civil servants, in the headquarters as well as on the ground in field offices, elucidates a more complete picture of the discourse and practice of development in regards to the involvement of UN agencies.<sup>35</sup>

## Heritage, knowledge and power

Arturo Escobar's findings highlight how development bears a great similarity to the discourse identified as orientalism by Edward Said, in producing, from the standpoint of the Western hemisphere, realities of the world that dictate "politically, sociologically, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively."<sup>36</sup> International organisations engaged in and further advanced this mode of systematising the world in Western terms, rendering Africa, Asia and Latin America into underdeveloped representations of Europe and North America. The work of Edward Said and others,<sup>37</sup> who have applied the notion of a Western discourse as a crucial influence in shaping the history of countries constructed as the non-Western "Other", is reflected in the conceptual history of heritage as well, in so far as heritage in itself has a history of being a Western scholarly tradition, political and cultural practice.<sup>38</sup> From the beginning on, Said's ground breaking work was accompanied by a broad critical debate regarding the constructed dichotomy of Western and non-Western. The anecdote about the Iranian conservator providing development assistance for Ethiopian heritage-making from the beginning of this text can serve as an example for the limitations of the term. Who is Western and non-Western here? A question similar to the one of who is to be considered developed and who underdeveloped? Being fully aware of this critical dimension, I argue that these distinctions are appropriate to use in this research work, because I interpret sources produced in these traditional lines of thinking and sticking with their language serves the purpose of writing a more contextualised history best. Furthermore, I understand these terms as analytical filters that can help to clarify accusations and discomfort held up against the World Heritage Programme. In short, I

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<sup>35</sup> As sketched out in: Joël Glasman, "Seeing Like a Refugee Agency: A Short History of UNHCR Classifications in Central Africa (1961-2015)," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 30, no. 2 (2017): 337-362.

<sup>36</sup> Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 3.

<sup>37</sup> For example: Marija N. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010); Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: the map of civilization on the mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2010).

<sup>38</sup> Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 6, 7.

would like to think of their critical dimension as the most fruitful connecting point to engage with the historical roots of the politicised aspects of the World Heritage Programme.

The conceptual history alone of the terms “heritage” and “conservation” in Western languages and cultures would merit more than one book.<sup>39</sup> Both concepts can be situated in the broader context of European history, in particular French and Anglo-Saxon traditions, in which historic monuments and landscapes are understood as being part of a specific national heritage, and where authenticity is a key concept in their conservation. Such traditions have evolved alongside scientific disciplines and specialised professions such as art history, archaeology for cultural heritage, and biology and geography for natural heritage. While in Europe the concept of heritage embodied the national monument, with the rise of imperialism the “discovery” of treasures and adventures gave way to a team effort between archaeology and politics, approaching the extra-European territories in search for monumental remains of narratives that formed part of the Western historiography.

The operationalisation phase of international organisations in the UN development decade is a process which underlines the argument that globalisation, especially in the twentieth century, can be understood as an outwards expansion of Europe.<sup>40</sup> This expansion resulted in the application of Western concepts and technologies on a global scale, with a strong hegemonic trajectory. Universal heritage, the key concept promoted in the World Heritage Programme, has its origin in a Western political, cultural and scholarly tradition, related to the discourses of nationalism, imperialism, colonialism that Walter D. Mignolo summarised as *The darker side of Western modernity*, relying on “principles that aspired to build a totality in which everybody would be included but not everybody would also have the right to include.”<sup>41</sup> By the time the World Heritage Convention was adopted in 1972, the fundament of its underpinning knowledge production was to be found within the Western academic sphere. The World Heritage Convention was conceived in the context of several international initiatives and programmes and was an expression of the broad international heritage discourse of the prior decades.<sup>42</sup> All state parties that had

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<sup>39</sup> A concise summary of the variation of the interpretation of the term heritage can be found in: Astrid Swenson, “„Heritage“, „Patrimoine“ und „Kulturerbe“: Eine vergleichende historische Semantik,” in *Prädikat “Heritage”: Wertschöpfungen aus kulturellen Ressourcen*, ed. Dorothee Hemme (Münster: LIT, 2007), 53–74.

<sup>40</sup> David Held et al., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999), 39.

<sup>41</sup> Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2011), 160, 161.

<sup>42</sup> Most World Heritage is indeed considered in its national dimension. Only a few World Heritage sites from the first World Heritage nominations explicitly evoked the idea of universalism by referring to an clear common past, namely the World Heritage sites of Jerusalem, Auschwitz, Galapagos, Omo.

ratified the convention were expected to submit national inventories of their protected monuments and sites,<sup>43</sup> out of which a list of sites would be selected of such *Outstanding Universal Value* that they could be considered World Heritage. The World Heritage Committee, periodically elected from all state parties to the convention, organised the implementation of the goals defined in the convention, namely the creation of and the selection process of the actual sites for the World Heritage List. The term *World Heritage Programme* occurs throughout the work and serves as a term encompassing all activities based on the World Heritage Convention, including the World Heritage List, Fund, Committee, Centre and more.<sup>44</sup>

The co-evolved concepts and scientific methods related to the Western heritage discourse translated into an elaborate and specific set of formal standards for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, regulating in a very detailed and comprehensive way the evaluation and selection basis upon which the World Heritage committee were to come to a decision.<sup>45</sup> In control of this determination of expert knowledge are the scientific advisory bodies,<sup>46</sup> which deliver comprehensive, site-specific reports that assess the Outstanding Universal Value of a site. World Heritage status remains conditional on appropriate conservation, evaluated through periodic monitoring executed by the same advisory bodies. To understand World Heritage, it is thus indispensable to understand the links to natural and cultural heritage conservation as academic disciplines. Both disciplines have the universal claim and approach in common and are consequently practised worldwide and often integrated in the development discourse.

Scholars from the field of heritage studies—a field that has evolved in the last two decades—argue for a complete re-conceptualisation of heritage and its challenges, and have

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<sup>43</sup> Discussing the scope and history of heritage and conservation in the context of World Heritage is conceptually problematic because of the inadequate distinction between natural and cultural heritage. This is problematic on many levels, as the two kinds of heritage operate on quite different ideas of what constitutes the material dimension of heritage and as the scientific knowledge related to the heritage is produced in completely different disciplines and is insufficiently linked through a validating discourse or arguments; Aurélie Elisa Gfeller, “Negotiating the Meaning of Global Heritage: ‘cultural Landscapes’ in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, 1972–92,” *Journal of Global History* 8, no. 3 (November 2013): 483–503; Andrea Rehling, “Universalismen und Partikularismen im Widerstreit: Zur Genese des UNESCO-Welterbes,” *Internationale Ordnungen und neue Universalismen im 20. Jahrhundert International Orders and New Universalisms in the Twentieth Century*, Zeithistorische Forschungen = Studies in contemporary history, 8 (3/2011), no. Online-Ausgabe (2011), <http://www.zeithistorische-forschungen.de/site/40209174/default.aspx>.

<sup>44</sup> For a detailed insight of the institutional evolution see Sarah M. Titchen, “On the Construction of Outstanding Universal Value UNESCO’s World Heritage Convention (Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972) and the Identification and Assessment of Cultural Places for Inclusion in the World Heritage List” (Australian National University, 2006); Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*.

<sup>45</sup> The requirements for the elaboration of standards evolved significantly over time, having today reached a point where it is expected that several years of preparation work are potentially necessary for a site to comply with all the requirements for a successful application; Thomas M. Schmitt, *Cultural Governance: Zur Kulturgeographie Des UNESCO-Welterberegimes* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2011), 368–72.

<sup>46</sup> The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural (ICCROM) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

pushed successfully for a much broader definition, including non-material and other forms of heritage.<sup>47</sup> This understanding allows for the use of heritage as a lens to view and study identity as well as cultural negotiation and construction processes, and the dimension of power and politics that is inherent in heritage and memory.<sup>48</sup> It has opened up the study of heritage as a discourse and practice, revealing further dimensions, factors and consequences, and moving towards a self-understanding held by many within the discipline itself of practicing “critical heritage studies”,<sup>49</sup> focusing on revealing the contradictions and flawed implications in the construction of heritage.

The most recent turn in the study of heritage is the argument for a global perspective on all matters of heritage, and for a global frame of reference to become a mandatory requirement.<sup>50</sup> Kendall R. Phillips and Mitchell Reyes state this specifically for the domain of public memory, which is most obviously connected to the framework of the nation state and presents one of the most contested territories in the face of today’s globalisation.<sup>51</sup> Yet, this global perspective should not be limited to present times, but used to gain new insights and understanding of memory-making and heritage production for all periods<sup>52</sup> and include within it the first and most prominent institution of explicit globality: World Heritage.<sup>53</sup>

World Heritage is especially called out for the problematic concepts of value and authenticity that form the basis of its operational guidelines.<sup>54</sup> Several works have attempted to address these critical implications from a historical viewpoint. There are three works on the historic genesis of the World Heritage programme from within UNESCO<sup>55</sup> and myriad smaller contributions that provide some good conceptual groundwork, but lack both deeper investigation and the critical mass of sources that would need to be consulted for a more general, overall history of the programme. Andrea Rehling makes the first consolidated attempt in focusing on the universalist thinking behind the programme, ap-

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<sup>47</sup> Markus Tauschek, *Kulturerbe: Eine Einführung*, Reimer-Kulturwissenschaften (Berlin: Reimer, 2013), 34, 35.

<sup>48</sup> Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (Routledge, 2006), 42, 43.

<sup>49</sup> Tim Winter and Emma Waterton, “Critical Heritage Studies,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 19, no. 6 (September 1, 2013): 529–31.

<sup>50</sup> Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad, “Introduction,” in *Memory in a Global Age*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 2.

<sup>51</sup> Kendall R. Phillips and G. Mitchell Reyes, eds., *Global Memoryscapes: Contesting Remembrance in a Transnational Age*, Rhetoric, Culture, and Social Critique (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011).

<sup>52</sup> Jan Assmann argues convincingly that this can be applied to antiquity, for example: Jan Assmann, “Globalization, Universalism, and the Erosion of Cultural Memory,” in *Memory in a Global Age*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 121–37.

<sup>53</sup> Christoph Brumann and Lynn Meskell, “UNESCO and New World Orders,” accessed October 28, 2017, [https://www.academia.edu/12511580/UNESCO\\_and\\_New\\_World\\_Orders](https://www.academia.edu/12511580/UNESCO_and_New_World_Orders).

<sup>54</sup> Tauschek, *Kulturerbe*, 94–115; Schmitt, *Cultural*, 120–32.

<sup>55</sup> Titchen, “Construction”; Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*; Michel Batisse and Gérard Bolla, *The Invention of “World Heritage”* (Paris: Association of Former Unesco Staff Members, 2005).

proaching the conceptual and intellectual history through several analytical lenses.<sup>56</sup> Numerous works that could be collectively termed interdisciplinary—originating from a discourse that can best be described as the theory of people who practice conservation, urbanism, and architecture—engage in discussing the critical political nature of World Heritage in the present day, but their engagements lack a more complex analysis to ground their statements in and often resort to “ascribing agency to UNESCO in its undifferentiated entirety”<sup>57</sup>, instead of identifying institutional logics, actors, processes and politics at play.

In this debate, a deep and general investigation into the history of the programme is long overdue. My thesis project provides new material and contributes to a more elaborate, complex historiography of the origins of the World Heritage Programme.

Markus Tauschek explains that universal heritage, eventually shaping up into the institutional framing of UNESCO into World Heritage, emerged in the context of a general shift towards heritage within Western culture, with an ever increasing, all-encompassing emphasis on the symbolic inscription of things as heritage in today’s society.<sup>58</sup> The evolution of heritage studies also owe to the fact that the scope of heritage itself has evolved and now requires a more complex analytical approach.

Because of this process, Thomas Schmitt suggests an understanding of World Heritage as a regime that is based on the expert knowledge of the epistemic “World Heritage” community. A regime is considered to be a set of mutual regulations and norms that a group of actors has accepted, and these actors’ expectations over a certain issue area tend towards convergence. The regime comes to life because all participating actors have an incentive to participate. While this is a helpful pattern to approach case studies with research questions, the answer that Schmitt (and others)<sup>59</sup> suggests, that states participate in the *World Heritage Regime* because the exclusive status provides a strong incentive, is too generic and abstract, as it leaves out a crucial dimension of heritage, namely the bureaucratic structures created to perform the authorisation of heritage. It is this dimension I want to highlight and reveal, as it is just as critical for the heritage production. The bureaucratic, legal processes of implementation significantly shape the actual outcome and production of heritage. This is especially true for World Heritage, as it is the product of a highly formal-

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<sup>56</sup> Andrea Rehling, “Universalismen”; Rehling, “Kosmopolitische”; Andrea Rehling, “„Kulturen unter Artenschutz“? — Vom Schutz der Kulturschätze als Gemeinsames Erbe der Menschheit zur Erhaltung kultureller Vielfalt“, in *Global Commons im 20. Jahrhundert - Entwürfe für eine globale Welt*, ed. Andrea Rehling and Isabella Löhr (München: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014), 159-95.

<sup>57</sup> Brumann and Meskell, “UNESCO and New World Orders,” 27, the paper provides an extensive literature review.

<sup>58</sup> Tauschek, *Kulturerbe*, 10-13.

<sup>59</sup> See Askew, “Magic”; Regina Bendix, “Kulturelles Erbe Zwischen Wirtschaft Und Politik: Ein Ausblick,” in *Prädiat “Heritage”: Wertschöpfung Aus Kulturellen Ressourcen*, ed. Dorothee Hemme, Markus Tauschek, and Regina Bendix (Münster: LIT, 2007), 337-56.

ised process and policy procedure, specifically aimed at initiating a respective legislative and governing basis within the member states to the convention.<sup>60</sup>

When Thomas Schmitt speaks of World Heritage as a regime, he refers to the activities of experts, using legislation, institution and policy building to operate.<sup>61</sup> Heritage-making, by definition is not only an institutional and scientific but also a territorialising practice.

Heritage, in many cases, is a legal instrument, regulating ownership over the site in question and conservation law can be a sensitive field because it can legitimise expropriation, an issue of concern especially for agrarian or pastoralist societies and indigenous people, where land-use and land rights are the most pressing. As a result, heritage has to be also seen as a tool of governance, an aspect that will prove most relevant when studying the application of Western heritage principles to many developing countries. In connecting heritage to human rights perspectives, like those of Silverman and Ruggles,<sup>62</sup> a frustrating abyss of the use and abuse of heritage opens up that makes it clear just how urgent a topic this is, especially in so-called developing countries and regions that are acutely or continuously permeated and riddled with conflict and war. The roots for this go back to the international heritage and conservation policies of UNESCO, built on a Western tradition of heritage-making, which allowed new argumentation and legitimation for governments to infringe on customary land rights.

Heritage-making activities were what Escobar calls “pervasive”<sup>63</sup> in all areas of their implementation, including legislation, landuse, institution building, policy making and identity construction. The impact of these pervasive practices on existing patterns of creating and conserving heritage, in particular World Heritage, is the subject of some anthropological studies.<sup>64</sup> On the institutional level, the integration process which took shape in policies, legislation, planning and development is closely linked to international cooperation and technical assistance and is barely present in current historic analysis.

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<sup>60</sup> J. P. Singh argues that from the beginning, defining and doing the practical implementation of UNESCO's idealistic goals was bound to come with struggle for funding, rivalry for relevance and competence, all of it interwoven with the political agenda of member states. The permanent tension “underlying UNESCO's norm-making capacity”, in which idealism is balanced out with the functional, bureaucratic aspects, results in contested norms. Many of the efficiency problems and frictions of the World Heritage Programme have their origin in the structural set-up of UNESCO, the contradiction between being assigned control over a wide agenda while simultaneously managing widely varying intersubjective conceptions of said agenda, of the member states and their cultural backgrounds and managing micro-level implementation rules. J. P. Singh, *UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization): Creating Norms for a Complex World* (Taylor & Francis Ltd., 2010), 2, 7; see also Andrea Rehling's explanation of the World Heritage nomination process as a domination of nation state interests over the cosmopolitan governance attempts of UNESCO: Rehling, “Kosmopolitische,” 388.

<sup>61</sup> Schmitt, *Cultural*, 89–94. Another difficult point about the analytical category of regime, from an historical point of view, is that assuming that the individual state actors' incentive is similar for all cases is too broad and generalising and neglects the different historical, political and social national context.

<sup>62</sup> Helaine Silverman and D. Fairchild Ruggles, *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights* (Singapore: Springer, 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 6.

<sup>64</sup> Christoph Brumann and David Berliner, *World Heritage on the Ground: Ethnographic Perspectives* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016).



This aspect of heritage as a governing practice<sup>65</sup> is however central to understanding why the development paradigm has politicised World Heritage, as it allows for an investigation of the production, the making of heritage—be it in the field or in the offices of the institutions involved—rather than the purely conceptual construction of heritage. For the following analysis I rely on an understanding of heritage that surpasses mere ideological interpretation, which, while relevant, is bound to exclude the equally relevant realities of bureaucratic and institutionalised processes, the varied “on the ground” processes complementing the discourse of heritage. Throughout my work I refer to the combination of all of these aspects of heritage as heritage-making, meaning not only the processes of cultural memory and imagined community that lead to the invention of a collective past<sup>66</sup>, but also emphasising the very physical and practical aspects at the governmental level.

## **The heritage debate in Africa and Ethiopia: heritage in service of nation building**

While the new global scope of historical studies calls for reflection, re-conceptualisation, and the need to update the analytical categories of political myths and national monuments,<sup>67</sup> specific problems and questions arise when looking at African heritage. In the context of decolonisation, the discourse of a particular African identity and intellectuality was actualised by the new setting and more immediate relevance. Many actors in Africa acted as representatives of sovereign, independent nation states and Western researchers had to reformulate their attitude towards these African voices. African intellectuals and supporters of the African cause in the West set out to rewrite African history as Africa's own history, as a decidedly un-modern, un-industrial history, and eventually interpreted the postcolonial period as African enlightenment.<sup>68</sup>

From today's viewpoint, many understand this process not as an emancipation but a renewal of the mechanism of producing knowledge about Africa within the Western aca-

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<sup>65</sup> Camila del Mármol, Marc Morell, and Jasper Chalcraft, “Of Seduction and Disenchantment: An Approach to the Heritage Process,” in *The Making of Heritage: Seduction and Disenchantment*, ed. Camila del Mármol, Marc Morell, and Jasper Chalcraft (New York: Routledge, 2015), 3.

<sup>66</sup> As discussed in David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ-Press, 1998); Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume: Formen und Wandlungen des kulturellen Gedächtnisses*, 3rd ed., C. H. Beck Kulturwissenschaft (München: Beck, 2006); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised ed. (London: Verso, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> Yves Bizeul, “Theorien Der Politischen Mythen Und Rituale,” in *Politische Mythen Und Rituale in Deutschland, Frankreich Und Polen*, ed. Yves Bizeul (Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, 2000), 15–39.

<sup>68</sup> Bahru Zewde, *Society, State and Identity in African History* (Addis Ababa: Ethiopia Forum for Social Studies (FSS), 2008); Messay Kebede, “Eurocentrism and Ethiopian Historiography: Deconstructing Semitization,” *International Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2003): 1–19; Andreas Eckert, “Afrikanische Intellektuelle und Aktivisten in Europa und die Dekolonisation Afrikas,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, no. 2 (2011): 244; Brenda Cooper and Robert Morell, “The Possibility of Africa-Centred Knowledges,” in *Africa-Centred Knowledges: Crossing Fields and Worlds*, ed. Brenda Cooper and Robert Morell (Woodbridge: Currey, 2014), 2–6.

dem system, rendering the supposed act of emancipation into a rewriting of African history under unchanged Western conditions and prerequisites.<sup>69</sup> As heritage has evolved alongside academic disciplines, the role of researchers and expert knowledge cannot be ignored when studying and interpreting heritage processes of all kinds. This is even more true in the case of World Heritage, as experts also play a crucial role in international organisations, which in fact present an important meeting and breeding place for experts and international expert networks.

The concept of universal heritage was based on Western historiography as were the dominating new historical narratives of the newly independent African states.<sup>70</sup> At the same time it is important to see that the instrumentalisation of cultural and natural heritage in the nationalistic and colonial/imperial contexts was highly important as a political and collective identity tool. The re-appropriation and emancipation of heritage-making therefore formed a relevant issue in the process of decolonisation—having a national heritage meant having a national identity and belonging to the community of sovereign nation states. Consequently, UNESCO served as a framework to promote the importance of history and heritage as a strategy for empowerment and fostering the nascent national identities of the new member states in the era of decolonisation. The *General History of Africa* was the outcome most indicative of this.<sup>71</sup>

With the World Heritage Convention and the insistence on national heritage sites defined by state ownership, the convention played out in the interest of the governments of new African nation states when it came to crafting and establishing dominant narratives. This concurs with more recent historical scholarship that argues in favour of paying a closer look at the constructed nature of tradition and culture in the context of social and political processes. The “invention of tradition”<sup>72</sup> is an essential part of modern statemaking, connected to efforts to stabilise identities in a globalising world or more generally in the face of rapid and frequent changes. As such, the concept seems fit to help us to understand the intertwined invention of traditions in insecure new governments or governments of countries which proved to be weak in a globalising economy.

Experts and researchers act as brokers in the heritage process between communities, governments, international networks and political and economic dynamics. Lynn Meskell

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<sup>69</sup> Bogumil Jewsiewicki and V. Y. Mudimbe, “Africans’ Memories and Contemporary History of Africa,” in *History Making in Africa*, vol. 32, History and Theory - Studies in the Philosophy of History (Middletown: Wesleyan Univ., 1993), 1–11; Paulin J. Hountondji, “Knowledge of Africa, Knowledge by Africans: Two Perspectives on African Studies,” *Rccsar RCCS Annual Review*, 2012.

<sup>70</sup> Andreas Eckert, “Ethnizität und Nation in der Geschichtsschreibung zu Afrika seit 1960,” *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 11, no. 4 (2001): 17–30.

<sup>71</sup> Unesco International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa, *General History of Africa*, vol. 1–8 (Paris; Berkeley; Oxford: Heinemann; UNESCO; University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>72</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1993).

writes that, “Heritage now occupies a new position in the global movements of development, conservation, post-conflict restoration, and indigenous rights”<sup>73</sup>, and she suggests a new moral imperative for the heritage experts, facing their actual agency and responsibility in the heritage-making process, especially towards local communities. Many studies suggest the need for new moral and ethical guidelines and in the context of this, thus delivering indispensable insights into the production process on the ground.<sup>74</sup> After all, conservators of all kinds are the ones in contact with people on the ground the most and are often the initiators or authorisers of heritage production. Archaeologists and anthropologists increasingly position themselves as actors and facilitators in a development process that is guided by a strong culturally rooted paradigm and not by economic growth alone. Yet, few of these debates really connect with the discourse and practice around the field or allow critical views from outside. To date there is no research on African heritage questions concerned with the evolution of conservation institutions and the application of conservation in African countries or the integration of international conservation policies in emerging nation states, even though several works show that the analysis of history, politics and the production and instrumentalisation of national mythology is an urgent and large lacuna, especially for the history of the modern African states.<sup>75</sup> The interdisciplinary research programme *Ethiopian heritage in the making* of the Centre français des études éthiopiennes (CFEE), Addis Ababa, aims to demonstrate the necessity of such an integrated approach for the Ethiopian case.<sup>76</sup>

A new, emancipated African heritage and historical discourse has existed since the mid-1990s, aiming to re-route the production of African heritage back to Africa and African scholars. This has integrated Western/Northern scholars into the discipline, but shifted the epicentre of knowledge production closer to the actual sites and practice of heritage. For these questions it is imperative to evaluate the status quo of the heritage industry which has evolved from an emphasis on the touristic and identification value of heritage sites, and to examine the political dimension of this industry. Peterson argues that heritage production is a key element of the organisation of cultural and political life and underlines the deeply pervasive character of heritage and knowledge production in African

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<sup>73</sup> Lynn Meskell, “Cosmopolitan Heritage Ethics,” in *Cosmopolitan Archaeologies*, ed. Lynn Meskell (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2009), 1, 2.

<sup>74</sup> Stephanie Koerner and Ian Russell, *Unquiet Pasts: Risk Society, Lived Cultural Heritage, Re-Designing Reflexivity* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010); as well as the contributions in: Lynn Meskell, ed., *Cosmopolitan Archaeologies, Material Worlds* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2009).

<sup>75</sup> Winfried Speitkamp, “„Authentizität“ und Nation. Kollektivsymbolik und Geschichtspolitik in postkolonialen afrikanischen Staaten,” in *Nationale Mythen – kollektive Symbole. Funktionen, Konstruktionen und Medien der Erinnerung*, ed. Klaudia Knabel, Dietmar Rieger, and Stephanie Wodianka (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 225–43.

<sup>76</sup> <http://cfec.cnrs.fr/spip.php?article20&lang=fr>

societies over the past century, thus being a kind of currency—financially, socially and politically—for the contemporary society.<sup>77</sup>

The story of heritage-making in Ethiopia is exemplary for many of the issues mentioned here. On a canvas of political, social and economically turbulent times, the story of Ethiopian heritage is an inherently political one and historical narratives have to be understood as a heavy leverage used by all contesting parties. It is not possible to fully comprehend Ethiopia's actions on the international stage during the timeframe of my research without some understanding of the internal tensions and identity politics prevailing in the country. Combining the broader perspective of Ethiopian national and international history in the twentieth century with the evolution of the heritage bureaucracy and the workings of foreign actors and their interests, my thesis will reveal the power relations at play in the heritage-making process in Ethiopia.

Ethiopian historiography was dominated by a hegemonic historiographical discourse of "Greater Ethiopia" throughout the twentieth century, which was albeit complemented by a counter-discourse of the failure to develop and democratise since the revolution, used and conceptualised within the political framework of establishing leadership. Western and Ethiopian scholars and intellectuals alike produced a dominant version of Ethiopian history which has only recently begun to be challenged in the field of Ethiopian studies and beyond. To overcome decades of history writing under strong state censorship, it is desirable to start by "deconstructing" Ethiopian history and study actors, motives, incentives and agency in historical discourses to fully understand Ethiopian history in a global context. To date, however, there are few who dare to pinpoint the question of Ethiopian history-making, despite the call for it and the ongoing lively debate.<sup>78</sup> On the state level it would not be appropriate to speak of the adoption of Western ideas. They did play a role, but more as impulses to reshape Ethiopian historiography, which already worked within frameworks, which, due to their Christian foundations, were structured similarly to European traditions of thought. This made the call for progress and modernisation an easy case of reforming these ideas without having to rely exclusively on a Eurocentric worldview. It also allowed for specific Ethiopian-Monarchic-Christian schools of thought on modernity.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Derek Peterson, Kodzo Gavua, and Ciraj Rassool, eds., *The Politics of Heritage in Africa: Economies, Histories, and Infrastructures* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Unfortunately, the volume follows a colonial/contemporary distinction which makes it more difficult to generalise the findings.

<sup>78</sup> Pietro Toggia, "History Writing as a State Ideological Project in Ethiopia," *African Identities* 6, no. 4 (November 1, 2008): 319–43; Bahru Zewde, "A Century of Ethiopian Historiography," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, no. 2 (2000): 1; Christopher Clapham, "Rewriting Ethiopian History," *Annales d'Ethiopie* 18, no. 1 (2002): 37–54.

<sup>79</sup> Marzagora, "History," 8, 9.

The starting base for this kind of “deconstruction” of the broader historiography of Ethiopia includes excellent works like Bahru Zewde’s study of the *Pioneers of Change*, revealing the intellectual driving forces behind the Ethiopian revolution of 1974<sup>80</sup> or Teshale Tibebe’s seminal work on *The Making of Modern Ethiopia 1896-1974*.<sup>81</sup> Especially when viewed through a sociological lens,<sup>82</sup> it becomes clear that there are a number of socio-cultural systems in place, evolving around the three major ethnicities: Tigrean, Oromo/Galla and Amhara, which are absolutely crucial when analysing the history of Ethiopian politics, state development and international relations.

Existing works on the evolution of institutional heritage-making in Ethiopia don’t sufficiently account for the international dimension of the heritage-making process in Ethiopia during the twentieth century.<sup>83</sup> They don’t make reference to the political dimensions of national heritage in Ethiopia, even though there is a nascent body of work on the historiography and political thinking in Ethiopia in the twentieth century,<sup>84</sup> a bridge my thesis attempts to provide. Understanding the links between Ethiopia and the World Heritage programme during its initial phase provides insights into the complex processes of knowledge production and an imminent hegemony that constitutes the World Heritage discourse and practice.

## Periodisation

In a first attempt to define a time frame for my research questions I identified chronologies within the official history of World Heritage Programme, looking at the initial ratification of the World Heritage Convention in 1972, and the 1994 *Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List*, which marked a conceptual evolution of the Programme. Simultaneously, I looked at Ethiopian history and events such as the revolutions of 1974, the year in which the Ethiopian monarchy was overthrown by a mil-

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<sup>80</sup> Bahru Zewde, *Pioneers of Change in Ethiopia: The Reformist Intellectuals of the Early Twentieth Century*, Eastern African Studies (Oxford; Athens, Ohio; Addis Ababa: J. Currey; Ohio University Press; Addis Ababa University, 2002).

<sup>81</sup> Teshale Tibebe, *The Making of Modern Ethiopia: 1896 - 1974* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1995).

<sup>82</sup> Donald Nathan Levine, *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multiethnic Society*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000).

<sup>83</sup> Solomon Gebreyes Beyene, *A History of Cultural Heritage Management in Ethiopia (1944-1974)* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2010); Kebede Geleta Terefe, “The Evolution of Archaeological Research and Research Monitoring Institute in Ethiopia: The Case of the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH)” (Addis Ababa University, 2008); Thomas Guindeuil, “Nature, culture, même combat? Sciences et conservation sur le campus d’Addis-Abeba (1950-1974),” *Etudes rurales* 197 (2016): 125–46; Niall Finneran, *The Archaeology of Ethiopia* (London: Routledge, 2007), 16.

<sup>84</sup> Sara Marzagora, “History in Twentieth Century Ethiopia: the ‘Great Tradition’ and the Counter-Histories of National Failure,” *The Journal of African History* 58, no. 3 (November 2017): 425–44; Alessandro Triulzi, “Battling with the Past: New Frameworks for Ethiopian Historiography,” in *Remapping Ethiopia: Communism and After*, ed. Wendy James, Donald L. Donham, and Elsei Kurimoto (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 280–85.

itary communist government, and 1991, when the democratic republic of Ethiopia was established. Over the course of my research, it became clear that much more relevant time frames included the first UN Development Decade, 1960-1970, the period of decolonisation and liberation in Africa between 1956-1965, as well as the period of Ethiopian state modernisation between the revised constitution of the imperial state in 1955 and the crisis in Northern Ethiopia which slowed down activities and international engagement in development in the 1980, resulting in the main timeframe of 1960-1980.

This idea of a continuity in the process of state-centralisation, running through the different forms of government is a more *longue durée* perspective on Ethiopian history<sup>85</sup> and allows us to understand the discourse and practice of heritage-making in Ethiopia as an example of the politicised nature of the World Heritage Programme from its inception, through its intertwining with the development discourse.

## Synopsis

Against this background, we can now enter the story of Ethiopian World Heritage and gain a more general understanding of the role of so-called developing countries in the World Heritage Programme. At the end, it will be clear that the politicised character of World Heritage is related to the fact that it began as a development activity.

The **first chapter** explains that the internationalist project was materialised from the developing world through the idea of universal heritage, highlighting World Heritage as an international activity and its links to the decolonisation process. The universal claim was essential to the ideas that were behind UNESCO's founding and in consequence, the construction of history and heritage for the internationalist project became a column of UNESCO's mission. During decolonisation UNESCO's role changed from being a more theoretical organisation towards becoming an operational one, an aspect that supported the application of the universalist claim through the location of universal heritage in developing countries.

The **second chapter** introduces the characteristics of the interaction between the Ethiopian government and the UNESCO secretariat, explaining the special quality of this relationship and why it was a key factor in UNESCO's effective operations in Ethiopia. In de-

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<sup>85</sup> This approach is argued for other historical developments in Ethiopia as well, such as the resource conflict—John Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: Sage Publ., 1998), 5; or a highland-lowland conflict: Alula Pankhurst and François Pigué, *Moving People in Ethiopia: Development, Displacement & the State* (Oxford: James Currey, 2009), 3-5; or the definition of what constitutes "Ethiopia", Christopher Clapham, "Controlling Space in Ethiopia," in *Remapping Ethiopia: Socialism and after*, ed. Wendy James et al. (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 9.

tail, I will make clear that UNESCO wanted Ethiopia as a model country for development projects, that Ethiopia had a strategic interest in UNESCO's assistance and that heritage-making was a central part of the relationship. To underline and illustrate the strategic aspect in this relationship, I will present an analysis of the communication between the Ethiopian government and the UNESCO secretariat.

In the **third chapter**, we will move onto the ground in Ethiopia and I will demonstrate that UNESCO had already been involved in heritage-making as a development activity in Ethiopia since 1960, prior to the start of the World Heritage Programme, laying the groundwork for a fruitful cooperation and substantially shaping the World Heritage Programme. I will clarify that the history of Ethiopian heritage-making institutions was characterised by foreign expertise, a necessary factor in understanding why World Heritage sites formed part of extensive heritage-making activities of UNESCO in Ethiopia. For a full understanding of the international character of Ethiopia's heritage, I will show that a particular, idealised image of Ethiopia underpinned UNESCO's World Heritage activities in Ethiopia.

The establishment of Ethiopian national heritage was not only characterised by heavy international involvement, but also by a continuous internal and external politicisation of heritage, which will be explained in the **fourth chapter**, demonstrating it was a particular political drive that got Ethiopia involved in heritage-making, and in which Ethiopia serves as an example for the specific interest that many developing countries had in heritage. I will describe how heritage was used by the Ethiopian government to craft a national identity after 1955 and how far heritage was part of internal political conflicts on Ethiopia. I will then move on to explain that heritage was used externally as well, in order to promote Ethiopia internationally. To complete this insight into the Ethiopian perspective, I will illustrate the impact of heritage-making on the social and political level.

In the **fifth chapter**, I will prove that heritage-making in Ethiopia was enabled by being put at the service of tourism as an engine of development and exactly how World Heritage was a development activity of UNESCO. I will start by explaining that after 1960, the idea began to take hold that tourism to natural and cultural heritage sites would be a critical resource for developing countries, in particular in East Africa. I will demonstrate how UNESCO deployed its heritage expertise in the service of tourism development, and conclude by shedding light on how tourism planning in Ethiopia accelerated and shaped the heritage-making process.

## Source material and methodological questions

At the beginning of my research, I attempted to trace all institutional actors involved, to better understand how to approach the question of implementation and networks. The most important ones included the World Heritage Committee, the respective departments within UNESCO that provided assistance and reviewed nomination files (changing names and organisational structure several times over the course of the research period), the advisory bodies the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council on Monuments and Site (ICOMOS), and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the agents carrying out operations in Ethiopia (especially UNDP), Ethiopian state-affiliated actors (the Ethiopian delegation in Paris and the government executive, i.e. ministries for culture and sports, food and agriculture, and federal or regional administrative offices) and research institutions (the Institute for Ethiopian Studies at Addis Ababa University (IES), and the Institut des éthiopien d'études et de recherches, the preceding institution of today's CFEE).

In attempting to locate sources that would allow me to study the individual perspectives of these actors, I visited several archives. However, not all these perspectives were equally accessible during the time of my research. The UNESCO archives had extensive holdings concerning all aspects of UNESCO's relations with Ethiopia, allowing insight also in the activities of UNDP, ICOMOS and IUCN. The country, department and issue based files contain mainly correspondence and notes as well as reports, enabling a deeper look into the everyday work of the UNESCO secretariat and the connections and networks surrounding the individual departments. UNESCO provides a large body of files in digital form, including films and photographs, via the *Unesdoc* website, and the World Heritage Centre's own website contains a digital archive with many files concerning the World Heritage Programme from its inception, including Committee meetings and the documentation for all World Heritage sites. The UNESCO library has a complete stock of scientific and popular science publications produced by UNESCO.

IUCN and ICOMOS have archives or libraries that can be accessed and which I visited, which contain some grey literature as well as photographic material that is otherwise unavailable, but they do not keep regular archives that enable an investigation of the institutional back-story. ICCROM has an archive, but I was unable to visit it during the time of my research.

Despite the main official language of Ethiopia being Amharic, many government affairs were conducted in English, due to heavy international involvement and the need to be in



control of the information circulating internationally. Locating files regarding the political aspect of heritage-making in Ethiopia, however, was a difficult and largely unsatisfying enterprise. The National Archives only hold material from all the imperial ministries up to 1974, and the existing material is scarce. For example, the complete file on Ethiopian Airlines (EAL) has a mere forty individual documents in it. The ministries themselves do not have official archives, but the two conservation authorities, the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), have internal archives and libraries that I was permitted to access. The Library of the Institute for Ethiopian Studies and the Kennedy Library, both part of Addis Ababa University, were a fruitful source of Ethiopian government publications and tourism-related material.

Other archives and libraries I visited to attain Ethiopian government publications, tourism promotion and press material from the 1960s-1980s include the New York Public Library,<sup>86</sup> the Hiob-Ludolf-Centre of Hamburg University, the Staatsbibliothek Berlin<sup>87</sup>, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Archives and Library<sup>88</sup> and the Berhanu Abebe Library of the CFEE in Addis Ababa.

On occasion, I had the opportunity to conduct personal interviews with experts involved in the Ethiopian World Heritage sites, namely Prof. Dr. Hans Hurni, Professor for Geography in Berne, Switzerland, who worked as an expert in wildlife conservation in Ethiopia for over twenty years and who was personally involved in the nomination process of the Ethiopian natural heritage sites, especially the Simien National Park; and Dr. Jean Renaud Boisserie, Director des Recherches at the CFEE. Most helpful information regarding the history of tourism in Ethiopia was provided to me in an email exchange, and a short personal meeting, with the journalist Arefaynie Fantahun.

Ethiopia officially uses the Ethiopian calendar, where necessary I converted dates and all dates are stated in the European calendar format for continuity. As regards the transliteration of Ethiopian names and terms, I simply followed the version used in each individual primary or secondary source; in following the Ethiopian convention of naming, which does not differ in first and last name but rather in first and father's name, I cite Ethiopian authors by their full name.

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<sup>86</sup> Particularly the Schomburg Centre for Research of Black History and Culture and the Science and Industry Library, which had a collection of all Ethiopian development plans.

<sup>87</sup> The Staatsbibliothek holds some years of the Ethiopian Herald.

<sup>88</sup> The SOAS Archives hold several personal files of British researchers and diplomats, documenting their activities in Ethiopia, including confidential reports and private correspondence with people in Ethiopia.

# **1. Heritage-making as a development activity of UNESCO in the 1960s and 1970s**

To understand the development endeavour at the origin of World Heritage, it is necessary to take both the internationalist project and the universalist, all-encompassing thinking behind UNESCO fully into account. The project entailed UNESCO to act as a producer of world history and heritage, thus meaning that UNESCO's concept of heritage-making was based on Western traditions. In parallel with the universal heritage discourse, in which UNESCO was a key actor, the practice of heritage-making as a development activity of UNESCO commenced in the 1960s. The conceptual parallels of heritage-making and development included continuity, in many aspects, with colonialist efforts, that was characterised by a territorialising dimension on the one hand and by dominating the identity discourse through authentication and image production on the other hand.

Both aspects were amplified to an effective dimension when heritage-making was practiced as a development activity of UNESCO. During the 60s, UNESCO manifested the scope of its internationalist conceptual underpinnings through operational projects in the developing world. The development paradigm, which was quickly gaining in relevance in the post-war and post-colonial world, caused a shift in UNESCO's role from an intellectual to an operational one, as it put the necessary funds into UNESCO's hands. UNESCO provided not only the institutional framework to scale the discourse of a selection of sites of universal heritage to a global dimension, but more importantly, it practically provided territory to apply the programmes and ideas, through the programme of technical assistance and later the UNDP.

UNESCO's cultural and natural heritage activities supported the internationalist idea with the construction of a historical identity. The selection criteria and the technological aspects of heritage conservation included a variety of territorialising practices, such as mapping, zoning and documentation, and supporting the construction of an ownership-like affiliation of the international community, or UNESCO respectively, over the site in question. Several of UNESCO's projects served a particular image production of universal heritage, which shaped the public face of UNESCO's activities considerably. A first selection of sites was derived in the form of an itinerary during the first monuments campaign, commissioned and discussed within UNESCO, and serving to represent the teleological history of civilisation from an intellectual Western perspective. The safeguarding campaign for the Nubian Monuments of Egypt and Sudan was promoted and publicised with

a well curated image production, ensuring UNESCO's authority in the visual representation of the universal heritage discourse.

## 1.1 How universal heritage became part of UNESCO

Internationalism and universalism were important ideological frameworks for the foundation of UNESCO, driving the activities and programmes of the organisation in the early years in particular. Within this framework the concept of universal heritage, understanding conservation as a common responsibility of the international community, was installed as part of UNESCO's mandate. In connecting existing traditions and an existing, Western discourse of heritage with the internationalist project, UNESCO provided a platform for a network of heritage-experts and created expert organisations as institutional gatekeepers of universal heritage. This served the organisation's role as knowledge production authority for the internationalist and universalist discourses, in particular historical knowledge that was constructed as part of Western historiography and a Eurocentric world history narrative.

The internationalist project behind UNESCO's foundation was also characterised by a type of thinking which valued a well-established tradition of scientific rationality as a guiding principle for political decision making.<sup>89</sup> During the founding process, the idea that UNESCO should become a community of scientists and intellectuals developing guidelines for the future would increasingly shape the structural and programmatic outline of the organisation. The proponents of intellectual cooperation had even argued against setting up UNESCO as a member-state driven organisation, and giving leading intellectuals voting memberships equal to the political representatives in the organisational hierarchy.<sup>90</sup> While this concept did not fundamentally find its way into the constitution of UNESCO, scientific experts and their knowledge were embedded in the ideological and structural foundations of UNESCO.<sup>91</sup>

The internationalist and technocratic ideologies that guided the formation of UNESCO also explain the emergence of natural and cultural conservation as a goal under UNESCO's mandate. Conservation of, and concern with, a universal world heritage was a legacy from the time of the League of Nations, and UNESCO inherited in accordance the existing in-

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<sup>89</sup> Haas, "Introduction," 8; Speich Chassé, "Technical," 30; Lepenies, "Besserwisser," 37.

<sup>90</sup> Hans Heinz Krill, "Die Gründung der UNESCO," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 16, no. 3 (1968): 272, 273.

<sup>91</sup> On a practical level, the political debates whether UNESCO should be set up as an intellectual cooperation or an intergovernmental organisation would later have very direct effects on the conservation activities. Ratification of conventions and financing of activities as an intergovernmental organisation had a more binding character for the member states. At the same time, both ratification and financing were also more influenced by political tendencies and subject to extensive bureaucratisation. Singh, *UNESCO*, 7.

ternational structures for conservation. Two key concepts of World Heritage—the idea of a universal, common heritage of mankind and the common responsibility to make efforts to protect and conserve this heritage—were already conceived during that time.<sup>92</sup> The idea held that in order to achieve the overarching idealistic goal of world unity and peace, efforts had to include a practice of heritage, and this idea was prominently integrated itself into UNESCO's founding process and was subsequently embedded in the constitution of 1946, which states that one of the organisation's tasks was to assure "the conservation and protection of the world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science".<sup>93</sup>

From its foundation, UNESCO provided an important platform for the existing academic discourse and initiatives concerned with conservation, fostering the gradual development of recommendations and conventions for the protection of natural and cultural heritage. Actors from within UNESCO, namely members of the secretariat, worked on establishing new expert networks or connecting UNESCO to existing ones for natural and cultural heritage conservation, in order to position the organisation as strategically central within the several international discourses of cultural and natural conservation. The establishment of these international conservation organisations and policies served the purposes of gaining and maintaining control, and ensuring an effective gatekeeping role for knowledge production. UNESCO's efforts regarding conservation did not originally contain a full-fledged idea of both natural and cultural heritage, but rather the idea of a universal heritage that can be traced throughout the evolution of the international conservation discourse, which in itself entails two separate discourses of cultural and natural conservation.<sup>94</sup> While cultural conservation was undisputedly one of UNESCO's responsibilities, the concept of natural conservation emerged alongside the rise of international organisations since the 1940s, and each concept has to be understood first as a separate history.

## Cultural conservation

In the field of conservation of cultural monuments, UNESCO linked several existing processes under its umbrella. The archaeological race between several Western European countries began in the context of colonial expansion around 1900, and was connected to

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<sup>92</sup> Titchen, "Construction," 22–34; Anna-Katharina Wöbse, "Globales Gemeingut und das Naturerbe der Menschheit im Völkerbund und den Vereinten Nationen," in *Global Commons im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Isabella Löhr and Andrea Rehling (München: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014), 134, 135.

<sup>93</sup> "UNESCO Constitution," Art. I, 2c.

<sup>94</sup> Andrea Rehling, "Universalismen," 6, 7; Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 1–20.

the first negotiations on international conservation at a diplomatic level.<sup>95</sup> The major driving force for the establishment of conservation of cultural monuments was, eventually, the obvious demand for a discussion on the future steps necessary to deal with the destruction caused by the two World Wars. The European nation states that also played a central role in the formation years of UNESCO were confronted with the large extent of the reconstruction needs of their cities in general, and in particular their cultural monuments. The necessity of international cooperation on a very practical level was evident to representatives of most states and this engendered a very favourable climate for the existing international associations of architects and restorers to connect with the organisation. Restoration architects, archaeologists and urban planners convened to formulate a counter-position to the arguments of the radical modernist and reconstruction movements, demanding the conservation and restoration of existing architectural heritage instead.<sup>96</sup>

UNESCO seemed an ideal platform in which to act as an independent international institution where professionals and experts concerned with conservation could meet representatives of government and civil society in need of larger scale actions. UNESCO had already hosted committees concerned with international agreements and legal instruments concerned with cultural issues, such as the International Council on Museums (ICOM) and provided, in addition to these good structural conditions, the status of being acknowledged as a provider and distributor of knowledge.<sup>97</sup>

As a first result, ICCROM or “the Rome Center” was created and started operating in 1959 as the first international organisation to be tasked with conservation and act as an international reference point for information, research, consultation and training. The establishment process, stretching over almost a decade and took place under the supervision of UNESCO. ICCROM was supposed to ensure the collaboration of differently specialised experts, and the efficient provision of sometimes highly specific expertise, such as the

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<sup>95</sup> Rehling, “Kulturen,” 165, 166; Charlotte Trümpler and Ruhrlandmuseum (Essen, *Das grosse Spiel: Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus, 1860-1940 [anlässlich der gleichnamigen Ausstellung, Ruhr Museum, Essen, 11. Februar - 13. Juni 2010]* (Köln: DuMont, 2010) and the recorded statements of German and English archaeologists on their political role, compiled by Schrott in Trümpler’s volume. Ana Filipa Vrdoljak, *International Law, Museums and the Return of Cultural Objects*, 1 edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 116, 117.

<sup>96</sup> Jokilehto and ICCROM, *ICCROM*, 3-10.

<sup>97</sup> Regional expertise was also strong in areas in Europe where cultural heritage was frequently damaged through earthquakes. In these areas, international conservation efforts in the form of emergency assistance date back to the early 1950s and highlight the existence of global networks and knowledge production in conservation. Italy, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Guatemala and Japan formed one cluster of countries whose monumental cultural heritage was frequently and disastrously affected by earthquakes, and were engaged in the exchange of knowledge regarding seismology and other specifics, see the letter from Prof. Raimund Lemaire to the DG of UNESCO, regarding emergency assistance to Italy because of destroyed cultural heritage after an earthquake, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 01 ICOMOS G.

conservation of lime stone paintings, for the monuments in need.<sup>98</sup> ICCROM was initially created primarily as an attempt to provide and circulate the knowledge and science of conservation in a more binding manner through the power of UNESCO's backing, in lieu of financial means to engage in the conservation of cultural (and initially predominantly) architectural heritage.<sup>99</sup>

In 1964, the International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) was founded, as part of the same process that had led to the foundation of ICCROM, to act as new international expert association for historic monuments. While ICCROM was supposed to provide expertise in restoration techniques, ICOMOS was supposed to constitute, in the words of the first President Piero Gazzola, "the court of highest appeal in the area of the restoration of monuments, and of the conservation of ancient historical centres, for the landscape and in general of places of artistic and historical importance."<sup>100</sup> Restoration, in the eyes of ICOMOS, was considered a responsibility that belonged in the hands of "qualified architects"<sup>101</sup> only and the international institutions were seen as places of moral authority, obliged to "prevent badly trained conservators from undertaking restoration of important works of art."<sup>102</sup> With the Venice Charter, an international code of conduct for restoration was conceived as part of the creation of ICOMOS. The Venice Charter, according to Piero Gazzola, presented "an obligation which no one will be able to ignore, the spirit of which all experts will have to keep, if they don't want to be considered cultural outlaws."<sup>103</sup>

In parallel to establishing binding standards for conservation, with UNESCO and the scientific experts being in control of introducing and controlling these standards, the idea of creating a "red cross" for the conservation of monuments worldwide became more important.<sup>104</sup> Building on existing instruments, such as the 1954 Hague Convention<sup>105</sup>, in a session of the General Conference of UNESCO in 1968 a first work plan suggested a meeting of experts to start coordinating and working on an "effective system for protecting

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<sup>98</sup> Apparently it was often difficult to find experts for highly specialised conservation tasks. For the conservation of Ethiopian limestone paintings in the rock churches, only two experts worldwide were considered capable in the first place, but they were both not available for the work in the prospected timeframe for the project in Ethiopia; project progress report, 15.6.78, in: UNESCO, 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. vii.

<sup>99</sup> Jokilehto and ICCROM, *ICCROM*, 167.

<sup>100</sup> Quoted in: Michael Petzet, *International Principles of Conservation*, vol. 20, Monuments and Sites (Berlin: ICOMOS, 2009), 11.

<sup>101</sup> Final recommendations of the *Congrès international des architectes et techniciens des monuments historiques*, Paris 6-11 May 1957, quoted in: Jokilehto and ICCROM, *ICCROM*, 10.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>103</sup> Petzet, *International*, 20:11.

<sup>104</sup> Titchen, "Construction," 59.

<sup>105</sup> Or the Recommendations on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations and the Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding of Beauty and Character of Landscapes and Sites. For a full list of all UNESCO's cultural legal instruments see: [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=13649&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=-471.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13649&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=-471.html).

and exploiting monuments and sites".<sup>106</sup> The meeting, and subsequent circulation of working papers, resulted in a draft national protection system in 1969.<sup>107</sup> While this recommendation was only concerned with the protection of monuments on a national level, it intended to create a worldwide standard of protection, including the commitment to conservation, that all member states to UNESCO would commit to enact.

## Natural conservation

The idea of natural conservation was part of an emerging, multifaceted environmentalist discourse that was, at the time of UNESCO's founding, prominent but still in its early conceptual state. The belief that science could mend the ailments of civilisation, a concept central to environmentalism, however, reverberated strongly in the ideological debates during the founding phase of UNESCO<sup>108</sup>. As a part of the science mandate, ecological endeavours and natural conservation were derived as activities for UNESCO. UNESCO's first DG, Julian Huxley represented a vision of "man's destiny as the new director of evolution on earth",<sup>109</sup> an evolutionary humanism as a new science-based value system that would "supply the world with a course correction consistent with the enhanced place of science as the source of explanation in modern life."<sup>110</sup> This position was controversial, because of its decidedly anti-religious approach, but these technocratic and internationalist visions had many like-minded actors within the sphere of international organisations.<sup>111</sup> Julian Huxley's polarising positions, ranging from eugenics to delusional geo-engineering proposals, mobilised environmental discourse<sup>112</sup> and boosted the authority and networking agency of UNESCO, particularly through the foundation of the IUCN in 1949. IUCN was supposed to connect existing government bodies rather than conduct research itself, and it was charged with providing and communicating existing knowledge and the rapidly growing body of environmental research and data alike.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Resolution 14/3.342, UNESCO, 31. Dec 1968.

<sup>107</sup> Titchen, "Construction," 80, 81.

<sup>108</sup> Singh, *UNESCO*, 5-8; Joachim Radkau, *Natur Und Macht: Eine Weltgeschichte Der Umwelt* (München: Beck, 2000), 106-7; Wöbse, "Globales," 139, 140.

<sup>109</sup> R. S. Deese, "The New Ecology of Power: Julian and Aldous Huxley in Cold War Era," in *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (Washington; Cambridge: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2010), 281. R.S. Deese suggests that Huxley's idea of man as Zoo-Director of the world might be related to his former position as the director of the London Zoo, *ibid.* 283.

<sup>110</sup> Paul T. Phillips, *Contesting the Moral High Ground: Popular Moralists in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain* (Montreal: McGill-Queens Univ. Press, 2013), 157.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 158; Rehling, "Kosmopolitische," 380-83.

<sup>112</sup> Huxley was also a defender of eugenics and geoengineering. In the interwar period he published an essay suggesting to use nuclear power in order to melt the polar caps to combat desertification; Kai Hünemörder, "Environmental Crisis and Soft Politics," in *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (Washington; Cambridge: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2010), 257-60.

<sup>113</sup> Holdgate and IUCN, *Web*, 66, 67.

Despite the all-encompassing, universal claims, the environmental question was divided along two different approaches: that of protecting habitats on the one hand and that of sustaining and efficiently using natural resources on the other hand. The idea of protection had a narrower focus on the aesthetic value of nature and therefore argued to protect nature from human influence. The idea of conservation was orientated around the scientific and empirical value of nature as an economical resource, and therefore aimed to protect humans from natural risks and to foster the use of natural resources for economic development. UNESCO achieved the position of a linchpin in redefining the rather narrowly-focused, strict goal of protection targeted at isolated species of flora and fauna, towards the conceptually more open and universally applicable concept of the conservation of nature, without neglecting the aesthetic aspect.<sup>114</sup> Not only was the concept of conservation more open to development and change, rather than the attempt to “protect” a status quo, it also permitted the inclusion of the use of natural resources, which had been a major contradiction in the concept of protection to national state economic interests.<sup>115</sup>

It is from this understanding that the concept of national parks serving as sites of a natural universal heritage emerged. In Julian Huxley’s view, it was the emphasis on conservation over other aspects of the environmental discourse that made it possible to integrate IUCN into the existing concept of UNESCO:

Delegates asked me what seemed to me silly questions: why should UNESCO try to protect rhinoceros or rare flowers? Was not the safeguarding of grand unspoilt scenery outside its purview? However, with the aid of a few nature lovers I persuaded the Conference that the enjoyment of nature was part of the culture and that the preservation of rare and interesting plants was a scientific duty.<sup>116</sup>

In particular, there was discussion of the role of national parks as providing much needed cultural and aesthetic education for the general public.<sup>117</sup> The legal and conceptual

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<sup>114</sup> Simone Schleper, “Life on Earth: Controversies on the Science and Politics of Global Nature Conservation, 1960 - 1980” (Datawyse / Universitaire Pers Maastricht, 2017), 3-37; Wöbse, “Globales,” 140-42.

<sup>115</sup> In particular, the notion of sustainability and biodiversity made environmentalism of interest to donors, as it presented the availability and conservation of natural resources as a basic condition for economic development and growth. UNESCO’s Man and Biosphere Programme aimed to serve as mediator between natural diversity and the economic interest of the local population, and integrated these fields in one programme, and suggested Biosphere Reserves as a new category of protected zones. In September 1968, the first Biosphere Conference took place, and was the first international conference concerned with the relationship between environmental and development problems. Schleper, “Life on Earth,” 42.

<sup>116</sup> Julian Huxley, quoted in: Holdgate and IUCN, *Web*, 22.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 41, 42; Bernhard Gißibl, Sabine Höhler, and Patrick Kupper, “Towards a Global History of National Parks,” in *Civilizing Nature: National Parks in Global Historical Perspective*, ed. Bernhard Gißibl, Sabine Höhler, and Patrick Kupper (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 10, 11.



framework of national parks, which dated back to the beginning of the twentieth century, presented the key conceptual link for the combination of natural and cultural universal heritage. In their final recommendations, the first international conference on national parks in 1961 linked their activities to UNESCO's recommendation to safeguard the beauty and character of landscapes and sites, submitted at the General Conference in 1962.<sup>118</sup>

The nature-related activities of international organisations experienced a considerable boost from the 1960s, when environmentalism expanded as a global discourse. Seminal works like Rachel Carsons *Silent Spring*, or *The Limit to Growth* by the Club of Rome, had a broad public impact and rendered environmental protection as well as environmental crisis popular and effective buzzwords among policy makers. During the global cold war, environmental concern arose as the first field of action for political international cooperation between many countries on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain. Since they seemed capable of overcoming divisions through common concern for the greater good of the whole world, consequently, the universal dimension transformed the environmental question into a subject of diplomacy in the early 1970s.<sup>119</sup> This “quasi-religious and ethical basis of cold war environmentalism”,<sup>120</sup> characterised by pacifism, eclectic mysticism and an integrated vision of life on earth, is an important conceptual foundation for the World Heritage Convention and the operational guidelines based on it. At that time, independent from the cultural heritage expert community, and embedded within the diversified and globalised environmentalist discourse, the idea of keeping a small, select set of sites as “protected heritage”, shielded as much as possible from human intervention and exempted from available resources for good, was evolving to include cultural heritage sites as well.<sup>121</sup>

### **Bringing together natural and cultural heritage in the World Heritage Convention**

Eventually, under UNESCO's guidance, existing efforts to establish an international framework to inventorise and protect universal heritage were condensed through the work of a year-long process undertaken by a Special Committee of Governmental Experts from over sixty countries. In 1972, the World Heritage Convention was presented to and adopted by the general conference of UNESCO. The DG of UNESCO, René Maheu, stressed

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<sup>118</sup> Recommendation 4, in: World Conference on National Parks et al., *First World Conference on National Parks: Seattle, Washington, June 30-July 7, 1962* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1962), 377.

<sup>119</sup> Hünemörder, “Environmental,” 274; Schleper, “Life on Earth,” 48, 49.

<sup>120</sup> Deese, “New Ecology,” 281.

<sup>121</sup> Wöbse, “Globales,” 152; Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 18, 19.

the achievement of “harmonizing” nature and culture, highlighting the competing claims for a definition of “universal” heritage by the various expert circles.<sup>122</sup>

The conceptual core of heritage-making that was installed as part of UNESCO’s scope of responsibilities at this convention, was scientific knowledge, guarded by the scientific advisory bodies. These organisations served as gatekeepers and ensured UNESCO’s defining authority for universal heritage. Initiating this foundation of international expert organisations concerned with natural and cultural heritage conservation (IUCN, ICCROM and ICOMOS) had resulted in a network of *international heritage experts* or a “family concerned with heritage”<sup>123</sup>—architects, conservators and environmentalists from the West with an internationalist agenda.

To summarise, the 1970s were a decade of consolidation and “manifestation of doctrine”<sup>124</sup> for universal heritage. Experts became important as institutionalised gatekeepers of knowledge which was the legitimising base for all of UNESCO’s actions and programmes. Experts in cultural and natural heritage, each in their sphere, collaborated in demonstrating their expert knowledge and status in their field was universally applicable, thereby feeding the policy making process behind the World Heritage Convention.

Yet, in contrast to the universal approach and the international scope, the circle of people involved in the creation of international organisations for the conservation of monuments was small and close-knit, composed almost entirely out of experts with high national and academic reputation, such as renowned professors, or chief state conservators from France, Italy and Belgium. They aimed for the creation of a network that would promote and empower their cause and, more importantly, their agency.<sup>125</sup> Their class, education and national background was, in the 1950s, rather homogenous, and provided the core of actors that would set up the principles, ideas and institutional foundations of the international organisations that would be involved in shaping the global conservation policies in the 60s and 70s.<sup>126</sup> Their spatial proximity, and shared ideological and academic home base, ensured effortless communication which greatly fostered the connection, collaboration and rise of the international heritage network. Many examples in the correspondence between the cultural heritage division of UNESCO and ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN show not only a legibly friendly tone, but also include references to

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<sup>122</sup> Titchen, “Construction,” 65–67; Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 20–24.

<sup>123</sup> Jokilehto and ICCROM, *ICCROM*, 8.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>125</sup> Pierre Gazzola, the first director of ICOMOS, was promoted into his position by Prof. G. Angelis d. Ossat, one of the main organisers of the Venice charter conference in 1964 and first Director of the ICCROM. Gazzola had previously worked with Georges Henri Rivière, the founding Director of ICOM and entertained close collaboration with UNESCO’s, Hiroshi Daifuku, who was his successor as programme specialist of the Museums and Monuments division of UNESCO. *Ibid.*, 8–10; Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 186.

<sup>126</sup> Deese, “New Ecology,” 208; Wöbse, “Globales,” 149; Simone Schlepers insightful description of the environmentalists’ network, Schleper, “Life on Earth,” 31–49; Rehling, “Kosmopolitische,” 392, 393.

personal connections, display an atmosphere of collegial intent, and show a certain degree of informal communication necessary to ensure workflow and nudge projects in their intended directions.<sup>127</sup> This personal connection, highlighting the anchoring of the centre of universal heritage in the Western cultural hemisphere, was key and highlights the discursive nature of universal heritage.

## 1.2 Universal heritage as a Western discourse

It was not only the concept of universal heritage that was essentially Eurocentric and occidental. The general universalist thinking that was woven deeply into the foundation of UNESCO was too. When speeches, programmes, essays and other documents spoke of “international” or “universal”, they were first and foremost concerned with European issues and argued from a European, or at best North-Atlantic perspective, since the majority of participants and conceptual architects of the organisation were representatives of the big Western nation states. The founding actors conveyed in their debates the naturalised notion of Europe as the most civilised place and the Western model of the nation state to be the most civilised form of existence. Possessing a national identity, and making decisions and acting on the basis of scientific expertise, were seen as preconditions for a civilised nation-state. Membership in an intergovernmental, international organisation like UNESCO was, in many ways, considered to be the highest form of civilisation. International organisations, and more specifically intellectual cooperation, were understood as the future and final destination of civilised societies.<sup>128</sup>

The emblem of UNESCO, designed in 1947 and officially used from 1954 on, showing a temple in the image of the Parthenon, was chosen because it was supposed to represent the “balance between nations that inspires UNESCO’s activities and of its cultural mission.”<sup>129</sup> This provides a sense of the key symbolic relevance of monumental heritage as the epitome of culture in the concept and ideology of UNESCO, despite being in stark contrast to the fact that the cultural activities, let alone heritage-related ones, only comprised a small percentage of UNESCO’s budget, programmes, and projects.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> One of many examples that occur in the files is the letter from Eduard Sekler to Hiroshi Daifuku, 22.11.1978, on occasion of Eduard Sekler coming to Paris for an ICOMOS symposium, in which Eduard Sekler wonders whether they find time for an informal talk related to the Kathmandu Valley and Sukothai, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 01 ICOMOS 06.

<sup>128</sup> Andrea Rehling, “Universalismen,” 3; Krill, “Gründung,” 269; In the official history of UNESCO, Michel Cunil-Lacoste chooses an anecdote from the French writer Andre Gidé to illustrate this attitude: Gidé reportedly wrote to the first Director-General Julian Huxley, “as an epigraph to UNESCO’s programme, the last line of the second book of the Aeneid, stressing its symbolic meaning: ‘[...] and assuming the full charge of my heritage, I shall strive towards the heights.’” Cunil-Lacoste, *Story*, 31.

<sup>129</sup> Cunil-Lacoste, *Story*, 69.

<sup>130</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 174, 286.

## UNESCO as a knowledge-producing authority

Providing knowledge of heritage in non-Western countries, in the context of international conservation activities, was especially relevant for the construction of the new international identity. International heritage conservation helped to make the developing world known, because it was communicated through respected channels and in familiar mechanisms of reference, such as via images and Western historical narratives.<sup>131</sup> In that regard, it is also quite notable that the early activities of UNESCO concerning heritage not only included conservation and the consultation of member states, but also a programme regarding the communication and promotion of the topic to the general public. This could involve the production of cultural guide books, with the authors of guide books being academically trained experts such as art historians and archaeologists.<sup>132</sup> The role of travel writers was considered critical for the visibility and promotion of the protection of monuments and the Federation Internationale du Journalistes et Ecrivains du Travail (FIJET) had a special commission on the protection of sites and monuments, collaborating closely with UNESCO's museum and monuments division.<sup>133</sup>

Heritage production, with its rich array of images and evocation of authenticity, was widely received by a broader public in comparison with the other activities of international organisations. The marketing factor of universal heritage, particularly in developing countries, was evident to some development organisations right away who then asked to be associated with UNESCO's heritage-making projects. The World Food Programme collaborated with UNESCO in several conservation projects, allowing restoration activities<sup>134</sup> to be incentivised by food-for-work-schemes. Other than the directly beneficial aspect for the people involved in the schemes, the additional advantage was seen in the publicity:<sup>135</sup> "Restoration of world-wide famous monuments will attract the interest of international public opinion and consequently will give a lot of presumably good publicity to the World Food Programme<sup>136</sup> [...]."

UNESCO's role as a producer and publisher of images of cultural and natural heritage provided the concept of a universal heritage of mankind with the power of representation. A strategic, extensive publishing effort was responsible for UNESCO becoming more visible

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<sup>131</sup> John Heath-Stubbs, *Time Honored: A Global View of Architectural Conservation; Parameters, Theory, & Evolution of an Ethos* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2009), 244, 245; Noel B. 1973- Salazar, *Envisioning Eden: Mobilizing Imaginaries in Tourism and beyond* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 89-97.

<sup>132</sup> Propositions for the 1959/60 Programme for the Museums and Monuments Division, 18.7.1957, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>133</sup> See correspondence between Committee and FIJET, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>134</sup> Which were deemed ideal, as they were labour intensive techniques that would qualify for the programme

<sup>135</sup> Letter from G. Bolla, to Mr. R.M. Cashin, 14.3.1979, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. viii.

<sup>136</sup> Letter from Maurizio Gnocchi to R.M. Cashin, 21.2.79, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. viii.

on the international stage, as well as in the attentions of an international public. Heritage-related activities played a key role in this communication strategy as they delivered highly impactful images that could resonate with a broader public, and were able to evoke a sense of affiliation with UNESCO's role in the world, and the urgency of their work<sup>137</sup> With communication being one of UNESCO's main mandates, the organisation had enough resources and expertise at hand to create impactful output. Photographers of international reputation, like Henri Cartier-Bresson, were attracted to the work and contributed their skills so as to produce and curate an impressive body of images of universal heritage that had lasting effect.<sup>138</sup>

### **The Monuments Campaign**

One of the first concerted efforts on behalf of UNESCO regarding image production and the location of a universal heritage of mankind was the Monuments Campaign during the 1950s. Under the auspices of the Museum and Monuments Division and the Cultural Activities Department of UNESCO respectively, the Monuments Campaign was planned from 1960. Based on a recommendation of the International Committee on Monuments to stimulate “public interest in the task of preservation of cultural heritage”, a campaign similar to the earlier successful model of the International Campaign for Museums of 1956 was to take place and be sponsored by UNESCO.<sup>139</sup> The monuments campaign was explicitly planned to elevate conservation within the international context through a combined, synchronised effort. The memo to the campaign suggested concentrating efforts on particularly representative monuments so as to inaugurate them during the “monuments fortnight”, intended to create favourable cluster effect of publicity and impact.<sup>140</sup>

As a part of the monuments campaign a selection of sites was to be presented in the form of a touristic itinerary.<sup>141</sup> The Swiss professor of art history, Conrad Andre Beerli,<sup>142</sup> was commissioned to prepare and conceptualise this part of the monuments campaign for UNESCO. To function as the core of the campaign, he presented a “monumental itinerary”

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<sup>137</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 290, 291.

<sup>138</sup> Cartier-Bresson's photos of cultural monuments appeared regularly in the UNESCO Courier during the 1950s.

<sup>139</sup> Propositions for the 1959/60 Programme for the Museums and Monuments Division, 18.7.1957, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>140</sup> Memo on comments on a draft resolution by member states from the Museum and Monuments Division to Gomes Machado, no date, in: UNESCO 069-72 A 14 pt. ii.

<sup>141</sup> Propositions for the 1959/60 Programme for the Museums and Monuments Division, 18.7.1957, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>142</sup> Armand Brulhart, “Beerli, Conrad André,” HLS-DHS-DSS.CH, accessed October 23, 2017, <http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/f/F43948.php>.

for the International Tourism Alliance in collaboration with UNESCO.<sup>143</sup> The itinerary would lead from Turkey through Syria, Lebanon and Jerusalem. The cultural heritage department of UNESCO suggested the itinerary in relation to the consultancy missions for the conservation of monuments that had taken place in Syria and Lebanon just shortly beforehand.<sup>144</sup> Beerli considered his choice an exceptional encounter with the occidental and oriental civilisations in the region, rendering the itinerary, alongside the supposedly most important sites of universal heritage, a kind of *Grand Tour* for internationalists.

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<sup>143</sup> Beerli was also the “collaborateur permanent pour les questoins culturelles au Touring-Club Suisse et a l’Alliance internationale de Tourisme (Geneva)”, Letter, from Conrad André Beerli to J.K. van der Hagen, 19.1.1959, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>144</sup> Letter from Beerli to Van der Hagen, 23.10.1959 and Van der Hagen’s response, 25.3.1960, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14. There are no reports for the missions listed in unesdoc, but they could probably be located in the paper archives, in the country files for Syria and Lebanon.

As part of the campaign, it was further planned that a film should be made, along with a small publication, to be distributed in all participating countries. The pamphlet for the campaign was supposed to have twelve photographs of a selection of monuments. In the movie, a selection of historic monuments from all over the world were to be surveyed, representing heritage and conservation, and explaining the problems facing monuments in the modern world, providing level of explanation aimed at the broader public. The campaign film that was developed presented a selection of monuments, staging them in a way that presented strong, iconic scenery of an array of monuments, establishing a template version of “the monument” in the public’s perception. For the most part, the selection for both the film and the campaign pamphlet of “universally known”<sup>145</sup> monuments representing universal heritage, was preconceived by the Museums and Monuments Division and Andre Beerli: the ruins of Persepolis, a deteriorated building in a tropical environment (“lianas, moss, wooden beams”), monuments destroyed from volcanos or earthquakes, a Dutch windmill, a Russian Orthodox church destroyed in the war, the Grand Buddhas of Bamyan, the discovery of the Buhen fortress in Sudan, the salvaging of the *Vasa*, restoration works in Rouen Cathedral, students in Oxford in front of Magdalene Hall, a canal in Amsterdam, a baroque park, a diver among the submarine ruins of Hali-carnasse, the fortress of Paramonga in Peru.<sup>146</sup>

The campaign was never executed in its intended form, and was eventually withdrawn in favour of the first international safeguarding campaign. The campaign to safeguard the Nubian Monuments of Egypt, threatened by the construction of the Aswan Dam, was launched in 1960, and is still often referred to as the “beginning of World Heritage” because for the first time the conservation of an actual site was undertaken as a joint effort of the international community, as envisaged by UNESCO.<sup>147</sup> An unexpected amount of money was raised for the safeguarding of the Nubian Monuments from the member states to UNESCO after an appeal through UNESCO’s general assembly. The spectacular deconstruction and reconstruction of the ancient monuments which took place during the six-year campaign attracted an equally unforeseen amount of international attention.

### **Monuments as icons of civilisation**

While one could challenge the notion of the campaign as the “birth moment” of the World Heritage programme, in any contextualised, proper historiography of the pro-

<sup>145</sup> Letter from Beerli to Prof. Demus, 30.9.63, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>146</sup> Draft template letter from Beerli, 30.9.63, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14. Due to budget cuts for the campaign, only images which had appeared in other publications could be considered. Letter from M.G. Rosi, to M.L. Gomes Machado, 11.1.62, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>147</sup> Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 12.

gramme, it can certainly be said that the strong visual images generated provided a convincing moment for the concept of universal heritage and international responsibility. The Nubian monuments were by that time already a template for antiquities and monuments, representing imagined places of classicist European thinking.<sup>148</sup> The strong visual image of the sphinx and other large monuments being deconstructed and reconstructed with the help of modern engineering was certainly an iconic moment, lending the concept of universal heritage a convincing and strong face.<sup>149</sup>

The broader Western tradition of cultural heritage expounded the understanding that a longing for lasting fame through cultural achievements was the highest aspiration of a civilised society. A culture that was able to produce monuments must therefore have been civilised. This demonstrated that cultural heritage experts were sharing and informing the internationalist view that Western societies presented the highest form of civilisation. International architectural conservation experts were deeply convinced of the idea that the cradle of civilisation existed, everywhere in the world, in the form of monumental remains, waiting to be conserved by a “civilizing mission”.<sup>150</sup> This reveals that the heritage-discourse was underpinned by a traditional Western understanding that only monumental remains of periods and societies acknowledged as civilisations in the Western historiographic discourse constituted part of a cultural heritage. This is illustrated by the remark of the Australian government, disclosing to not have any interest in or any kind of government agency for antiquities, when asked about the state of monument conservation in the context of a survey conducted by UNESCO’s cultural heritage division in the 1950s. In their view, Australia did not possess real antiquities.<sup>151</sup>

The particular notion of authenticity that was later established as one of the evaluation criteria for World Heritage sites<sup>152</sup> was that it had to be evidence-based, in the tradition of cultural heritage conservation. According to this notion, authenticity was generated from “the spectator’s emotions [...]. The authentic [heritage site] then is the one able to produce authentic -strong- emotions.”<sup>153</sup> Following Walter Benjamin’s critical notion of the specific quality of authentic places, which he described as “aura”, an auratic place is one where the

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<sup>148</sup> Rehling, “Kulturen,” 165–68.

<sup>149</sup> Mechthild Rössler, “Weltkulturerbe und Globalisierung: Vom Weltwunder zum Erbe der Menschheit,” in *Welt-Räume: Geschichte, Geographie und Globalisierung seit 1900*, ed. Iris Schröder and Sabine Höhler (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2005), 240; Rehling, “Kulturen,” 169–71.

<sup>150</sup> Michael Falser, “Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission - An Introduction,” in *Cultural Heritage as Civilizing Mission*, ed. Michael Falser (Cham: Springer, 2015), 3, 4; Anne Eriksen, *From Antiquities to Heritage: Transformations of Cultural Memory* (Berghahn Books, 2014), 25, 26; Poul Duedahl, “Selling Mankind: UNESCO and the Invention of Global History, 1945-1976,” *Journal of World History* 22, no. 1 (2011): 103; Andrea Rehling, “Universalismen,” 3; Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume*, 45.

<sup>151</sup> Response letter from the Australian Delegation, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>152</sup> termed Outstanding Universal Value in the World Heritage Convention

<sup>153</sup> Eriksen, *Antiquities*, 72–74.



unreachable distance of the past can be sensually experienced.<sup>154</sup> Authentication is in that sense a process of estrangement through aestheticisation, transforming a place into a site of representation of memory.<sup>155</sup> The first monuments and parks chosen to be included in each of the monument and safeguarding campaign, were places with a connection, a “spiritual message”<sup>156</sup> to Western universal history, but located outside of Europe, such as Borobodur in Indonesia, the Ile de Gorée in Senegal or the old town of Havana in Cuba. This aspect allowed their authentication as heritage sites because in most cases they already were considered part of Western historiography: classical places that formed part of European history, representing the extra-European, oriental origins of civilisation, whose authenticity was immediately granted upon reading or viewing images of them which were composed along the nexus of familiarity and difference. This made it easy for UNESCO and the international heritage experts to include developing countries into the universal heritage and international identity discourse.

### 1.3 Universal heritage as part of the development discourse

Over time, the notion of monumental heritage as a universal trait of a nation state became intertwined with the development and decolonisation processes. As UNESCO shaped and expanded its operational sphere and influence through the addition of member states, many experts in the fields of education, culture, science and communication had the opportunity to implement their expertise in new regional and cultural contexts. In addition, it became apparent that there was a growing demand for specific regional expertise and this provided an opportunity for experts holding this from research activities or after a colonial engagement, to utilise it in a new, larger context. The knowledge of developing countries that formed the basis of operations for international organisations was derived from a compound body of knowledge frequently produced within the context of deeply unjust and unequal situations during the centuries of European colonialism, including missionary work as well as anthropological, botanical, zoological, geographical and archaeological research.<sup>157</sup> This situation put UNESCO in a role as

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<sup>154</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit: drei Studien zur Kunstsoziologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1963), 12–14.

<sup>155</sup> Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume*, 338.

<sup>156</sup> Petzet, *International*, 20:13.

<sup>157</sup> Cooper and Morrell, “Possibility,” 3; Hana Horáková, “Knowledge Production in and on Africa: Knowledge Gatekeepers, Decolonisation, Alternative Representations,” in *Knowledge Production in and on Africa*, ed. Kateřina Werkman and Hana Horáková (Wien; Zürich: LIT, 2016), 35, 36; Jeremiah O. Arowosegbe, “African Studies and the Bias of Eurocentricism,” *Social Dynamics* 40, no. 2 (June 2014): 310, 311; Joseph M. Hodge, “British Colonial Expertise, Post-Colonial Careerism and the Early History of International Development,” *Journal of Modern European History* 8 (April 2010): 25–27.

knowledge producer, particularly for developing countries, merging existing colonial knowledge with the new knowledge inspired by internationalist thinking.

### **Conservation as a Western science**

Many conservators understood themselves to be first and foremost scientists or technicians, and their knowledge as neutral and objective. Conservation of natural and cultural heritage had evolved since the nineteenth century as an academic discipline and scientific method in Europe and the USA. The larger part of scientific conservation activities was not necessarily concerned with information regarding the functions or practices connected to the heritage site, but more that information perceived to be of as empirical a nature as possible. The central premise of conservation as science was to treat values and authenticity as universal and empirically evident categories that could be observed and measured. Heritage, according to this conception, operated on the premise of a universal culture, a fact which was empirically grounded in an objective reality. The technologies of scientific conservation enabling the production of the empirical knowledge encompassed documentation, inventorisation, mapping, and similar techniques, resulting in the collection of a lot of environmental data.<sup>158</sup>

With the emergence of post-war internationalism, and UNESCO as a conceptual key player in this field, conservators rose to a new status as producers of knowledge necessary to the overarching context of a new international identity that had the ability to locate particular authentic value in actual spaces. The experts and scholars of the academic disciplines contained in the scientific conservation sphere naturally also concerned themselves with applying their expertise to non-Western regions. The universalist claim was embedded in the evolution of the academic disciplines, which aimed at classifying, categorising and taking stock of the entire inventory of natural resources and cultural remains. Archaeology, for example, was not originally concerned with European remains but with oriental ones, and the discovery of new species in varied corners of the world was long viewed as the pinnacle of research achievement in the natural sciences.<sup>159</sup> Many international heritage experts saw UNESCO as the final destination for conservation in the Western tradition, since it ennobled the science of conservation as the provider of a “universal world knowledge”.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Eriksen, *Antiquities*, 89, 92; Schleper, “Life on Earth,” 34–36.

<sup>159</sup> Tonia Davidovic-Walther, “Die Herstellung archäologischen Wissens. Praxen und Interaktionen,” *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 107, no. 1 (2011): 62–64.

<sup>160</sup> Petzet, *International*, 20:11; Holdgate and IUCN, *Web*, vii.

The centre of this heritage-related knowledge production, however, remained firmly located in Western Europe, despite the international scope of UNESCO's activities. Almost all fellowships given out by UNESCO in correlation with cultural heritage were for training courses at European institutions, such as in photogrammetry, painting restoration, museology, stone conservation, and study tours through European museums, for example in Belgium, Italy, England or France.<sup>161</sup> These preferred places of study for conservation and restoration reflected the provenance of the first ICOMOS founding actors—leading scholars in the field of conservation that dominated the universal heritage discourse. The somewhat protectionist and bureaucratic approach of Western heritage-making knowledge production can be traced particularly well throughout the fellowship applications. Sometimes study programmes were revised up to six times before being submitted for budget approval.<sup>162</sup> This meant the candidates in request had to wait a lengthy time for approval and were then required to suddenly be available if approved. On another practical level, the long term effect of the fellowships for candidates from developing countries was questioned by the staff in the UNESCO secretariat, for example when the expensive equipment used during the fellowship did not match up with the more simple ones available in their home country. This imbalance, resulting from the technological aspect of conservation, illustrates the greater structural inequality. Many fellowship recipients had received top-notch training at specialised equipment that in no way matched the conditions in their home countries. Even though UNESCO and other donors financed and organised the import of specialised equipment, the process was long and bureaucratic, often resulting in equipment being bought that no one could maintain or where spare parts or consumable supplies like films were not possible to acquire locally.<sup>163</sup>

### **Heritage-making as development aid for nation-building**

In an effort to promote it as a development aid for nation-building, institutionalising heritage-making as a state domain, where the state held authority over the representation of national identity, was particularly relevant. UNESCO's heritage-making was based on Western traditions of using heritage-making and heritage as a political tool, through a territorialising practice, locating claims in actual physical space, and through the practice of dominating the discourse of identity construction through taking charge of represen-

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<sup>161</sup> Memo from Patrick Bulenzi to C.B. Watson, no date, in: UNESCO, 069:72 (63) 136 A 136; list of study grants, no date, in: UNESCO, 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. ixb; individual fellowship applications and a manual for fellowship applications can be found in: UNESCO, 069:72:376.

<sup>162</sup> Memo from C.B. Watson to Mrs. C.M. Singleton, 13.9.1968, in: UNESCO, 069:72:376.

<sup>163</sup> Request for an inventory of immovable and movable cultural heritage (provision of equipment), 29.12.1983, in: UNESCO BRX AFR, 4; see ch. 3.2.

tation through image production. Both practices serve to legitimise the hegemonic position of the government in the heritage discourse through authentication.<sup>164</sup> Universal heritage thus represented a new collective memory, with a particular, Western style of relating to the past through heritage sites identified as authentic, serving as *lieux de mémoire*. This authenticity was manifested, on the one hand, through affiliation with an imagined community. The actors involved in the foundation of UNESCO outlined an imagined community of world citizens and the international heritage experts identified, through their universal claim, the world as their *lieu de mémoire*.<sup>165</sup> In order to gain relevance in the collective memory, myths and historic narratives for the international community needed to be localised, so as to allow the identification of places considered as authentic sites of heritage.<sup>166</sup> This understanding was key to constructing a new, international identity representing the United Nations, and it could be delivered through the concept of a universal heritage.

Two types of formats from the scientific repertoire of conservation provided the discourse of universal heritage and UNESCO's heritage-making efforts with an empirical base: inventories and itineraries. Creating itineraries through maps and publications, and the collation of inventories whose lists were sites of Eurocentric world history, both ensured universal heritage was a demonstration of the legacy of the Western tradition of heritage-making. Scientific identification, classification and inventory, supposed to make the claim for evidence-based authenticity, gave heritage-making a particular dimension as a "territorializing practice"<sup>167</sup> aiming "to encompass everything into the complete *mappa mundi*—a vision of world made coherent through the ideal of humanity's common heritage."<sup>168</sup> In order to achieve a universal scientific database that would suffice this criterion for empirical evidence of heritage, it was necessary to promote the establishment of national inventories for heritage.<sup>169</sup> In a joint effort, experts at UNESCO and from North America developed an inventory system with index cards, disseminated this system

<sup>164</sup> David Lowenthal, *Heritage*, 240, 241; Indra Sengupta, "Locating Lieux de Mémoire: A (Post)colonial Perspective," in *Memory, History, and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), 6.

<sup>165</sup> Iris Schröder, "Die UNESCO und das Welterbe als künftiger europäischer Erinnerungsort," in *Europäische Erinnerungsorte 3 - Europa und die Welt*, ed. Pim den Boer et al. (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2012), 281–88; viewed from this spatial angle, UNESCO and the World Heritage Programme could also be understood as one of the institutions that Matthias Middell suggests to analyse as "portals of globalisation", Matthias Middell, "Erinnerung an Die Globalisierung? Die Portale Der Globalisierung Als Lieux de Mémoire. Ein Versuch," in *Europäische Erinnerungsräume*, ed. Kirsten Buchinger, Claire Gantet, and Jakob Vogel (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009), 296–308; see also Sandrine Kott's argument to understand the ILO as a lieu de mémoire, constructed mainly by the international civil servants working within the organisation, in: Sandrine Kott, "Kann es transnationale Erinnerungsorte geben? Die International Labour Organisation und die soziale Erinnerung Europas," in *Europäische Erinnerungsräume*, ed. Kirsten Buchinger, Claire Gantet, and Jakob Vogel (Frankfurt: Campus, 2009), 281–95.

<sup>166</sup> Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume*, 307; Andrea Rehling argues that localising World Heritage sites was crucial for forming a new perception of the global dimension as a network of local places Rehling, "Kosmopolitische," 396.

<sup>167</sup> Lisa Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence: The Politics of Heritage* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 30.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Cameron and Rössler, *Voices*, 19, 28.

among member states and declared it as the mandatory standard for all other countries. The territorialising aspect was perhaps most obvious in the requirement of the provision of a map of the site in question in order for it to become inventorised as heritage site. Mapping, a process of “locating, identifying and bounding phenomena”<sup>170</sup> enabled situation of events, processes and things within the coherent spatial frame of an international sphere and produced maps as authoritarian images in an internationalist discourse.<sup>171</sup> This effort to systematise and classify heritage through lists, inventories and catalogues, albeit to a scientific standard, was not widely practiced in many countries and UNESCO emerged as a generator of this new global norm of heritage-making, in particular for developing countries. As a result of the developmental paradigm shift, in the 1960s and 1970s UNESCO's policies and operational guidelines had a technocratic and socio-cultural engineering character, a quality that introduced them into the developing countries as political tools.<sup>172</sup> Heritage-making was no exception, based on a concept originating in a specific Western cultural context, concerning not just the role and handling of monuments in society, but more specifically the nature and quality of state administration.<sup>173</sup> The network of international heritage experts had exported the Western scientific and bureaucratic standard of cultural and natural heritage conservation as the international standard. Already before 1950, as part of the preparation for the monuments campaign, an inquiry about the status quo of “protection of beauty and character of landscape” was conducted with the member states of UNESCO<sup>174</sup>. The responses were circulated among the participating states, turned into an exhibition, and published in a special issue of the *Museum* journal, which was edited and published under UNESCO's roof. Not only did the campaign raise the general awareness of the issue of monuments, it was also an explicit goal of the monuments campaign to establish an international inventory. During the monuments campaign, the member states would again be encouraged to undertake national inventories:

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<sup>170</sup> David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2001), 220.

<sup>171</sup> J. B. Harley and Paul Laxton, *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography* (JHU Press, 2002), 168.

<sup>172</sup> Cooper, “Writing,” 18.

<sup>173</sup> Derek Peterson, “Introduction - Heritage Management in Colonial and Contemporary Africa,” in *The Politics of Heritage in Africa* (New York, 2015), 10–18; William Carruthers, “Multilateral Possibilities: Decolonization, Preservation, and the Case of Egypt,” *10.5749 Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 13, no. 1 (2016): 42.

<sup>174</sup> Questionnaire; Rapport faisant suite à l'étude préalable pour la campagne internationale des monuments, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14. Also other inquiries, part of them originally a study for the Council of Europe on the state of conservation in its member states, contained in parts in this file, would allow a comparative analysis of the legal and institutional landscape of heritage conservation in a number of states at the time.

Certain work, such as classifying and listing monuments might likewise be planned for the period of the Campaign. Ways of making it easier to locate monuments—e.g. signposts on roads and in cities—could well be considered also.<sup>175</sup>

In 1970, a renewed study by UNESCO argued for the need for greater international action and engagement, criticising the state of conservation standards in many countries. Another effort to prepare a systematisation of international conservation efforts consisted of a series of photogrammetric surveys of historic buildings and sites carried out in 1975.<sup>176</sup>

### **Development programmes and UNESCO's organisational growth**

During the first UN Development Decade the new understanding of development also resulted in an opportunity for UNESCO to expand and grow through operationalisation, as an unprecedented amount of funds to conduct projects became available through the paradigmatic shift of the UN.<sup>177</sup> UNESCO had two major operational programmes related to development, the Participation Programme and the technical assistance programme. With these two development programmes in place, UNESCO gained notably in relevance and, more importantly, in publicity and visibility.

UNESCO's Participation Programme or "Programme of Activities of Member States" was developed as a means to give assistance to member states, complementary to the planned activities foreseen in the regular budget. According to the original agreement, assistance through the Participation Programme was neither limited to developing countries nor tied to the development paradigm, but to the overarching objectives of UNESCO. Over time however, the Participation Programme turned *de facto* into a small scale development aid programme.<sup>178</sup> Corresponding with the technical assistance programme of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UNESCO started its first explicit development activities in 1950. In the following years, numerous experts and consultants were assigned to provide technical assistance to member states upon their request, usually

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<sup>175</sup> Memo on comments on draft resolution by member states from Museum and Monuments Division to Gomes Machado (director, department of cultural activities), no date, in: UNESCO, 069:72 A 14.

<sup>176</sup> Inventaire des relevés photogrammetriques de monuments et de sites effectues in 1975, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 01 ICOMOS G.

<sup>177</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 290.

<sup>178</sup> Peter I. Hajnal, *Guide to Unesco* (London: Oceana Publ., 1983), 103-9; within the 20 years after its inception in 1955, the programme gained enormously in scope and demand: an increase in member states by a factor of 1.7 was accompanied by a 20-fold increase in the total amount of requests submitted. In terms of geographic distribution, the highest amount of funding was allocated to African countries since the highest number of requests also came from them. *The Participation Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Why, What, How*. (Unesco, 1978), 13.

for short-term missions of only a few weeks duration.<sup>179</sup> The main areas for requested assistance were in education—especially literacy—and science. In 1966, UNESCO was made a designated executive agency for the UNDP and was allocated a sizeable budget through which it could start larger-scale development projects.<sup>180</sup> Through this association with the UNDP during the first UN development decade as well as through the emphasis on development in the Participation Programme, so-called developing countries offered ample opportunities for UNESCO to apply its operations and expertise in a drastically enlarged territory. Most of these countries had only recently joined the UN system as a result of decolonisation and their newly gained independence. For many developing countries, this meant that during the 1960s and 1970s assistance and aid spiked in the educational, scientific and cultural sectors.<sup>181</sup>

Knowledge and expertise of heritage-making in the Western tradition gained global reach through UNESCO, but still lacked territory for this to be applied to. The internationalist project's theoretical claim to universal responsibility had a chance to be put into practice during the first UN development decade. The universal claim allowed the free, democratic nation states of the West to act as the providers of ideas to supporters of the liberation movements in the developing world, indeed as liberators of the colonised countries. Since the internationalist project and the Western ideas of civilisation and world history conveyed in it were inextricably linked to the ideological aspects of nationalism and national identities and the discourse of heritage and monuments, conservation was seen by many inside UNESCO as a development activity, not so much economically but more in the sense of fostering national identity so as to strengthen and stabilise the newly emerging nation states.<sup>182</sup> Additionally, while the expert organisations were officially acting as an ideological platform, providing and exchanging knowledge, they were concerned about a lack of funds. Although their ideas drew attention and sympathy, the lack of endorsement for practical operations threatened the lasting influence of such organisations and universal heritage-making efforts. Looking to gain revenue through the implementation of programmes, the organisations waited for an opportunity to operationalise their affairs. The paradigmatic shift towards development and the increase of funds for operations provided an opportunity for UNESCO to commence heritage-making as a development activity.<sup>183</sup>

In this process, UNESCO made use of its role as a history-producing authority in providing not only a universal framework, in which to include all the new nation states, but also by

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<sup>179</sup> Valderrama Martínez, *History*, 67; for 1954, he lists 125 missions to 36 countries, 98.

<sup>180</sup> Conil-Lacoste, *Story*, 49.

<sup>181</sup> Rist, *History*, 88–90; Murphy, *UNDP*, 85–88.

<sup>182</sup> Rehling, “Kulturen,” 174; Maurel, *Histoire*, 233–35.

<sup>183</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 285–91; Rössler, “Weltkulturerbe,” 240.

considering it its responsibility to strengthen and support the establishment of cultural identities. The project of the *General History of Africa* is perhaps the most prominent example of how historiography was undertaken as a political enterprise within UNESCO, aiming to elevate a new African identity into the ranks of other civilised societies.<sup>184</sup> Already during the monuments campaign, developing countries proved very responsive to UNESCO's call for engaging in heritage-making.<sup>185</sup> The Nubian Monuments Campaign marked a shift in the general orientation of UNESCO towards specific projects, commencing an era of conservation activities and heritage-making in developing countries.<sup>186</sup> The success of the Nubian Monuments Campaign and the new availability of funds in turn led to several more safeguarding campaigns, perceived to be "Triumphs in Restoration and Development"<sup>187</sup>, almost all of which were took place in so-called developing countries.

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<sup>184</sup> Rehling, "Kulturen," 167, 177; While praised as a re-establishment project of authentic African historiography, the project was in many parts neither methodologically nor conceptually far removed from the Eurocentric and racist implications that had dominated African history as written by Western historians, see: Andreas Eckert, "Auf der Suche nach der 'wahren' Geschichte Afrikas: Die UNESCO General History of Africa," *Periplus. Jahrbuch für außereuropäische Geschichte* 5 (1995): 178–83.

<sup>185</sup> The majority of the response letters to the questionnaires in the file for the monuments campaign is from developing countries, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14.

<sup>186</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 283.

<sup>187</sup> Title of a panel at the conference for North American journalists "Crisis in our cultural heritage: why preserve the past", co-sponsored by UNESCO and the Smithsonian Institution in Cooperation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the US-ICOMOS, Washington, April 8-10, 1984, conference programme in: UNESCO 069:72 A 01 ICOMOS G.



## The “conservator’s gaze” and the developing world

In a similar manner, the natural heritage discourse was incorporated into the universal heritage discourse. Natural conservation was also thought to have a particular relevance for decolonisation in Africa. Julian Huxley, for example, in relation to his personal preference and affiliation with African wildlife, understood IUCN as a means to navigate the politics of decolonisation in order to promote wildlife areas all over the world.<sup>188</sup> IUCN, UNESCO and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) lobbied jointly for the establishment of national parks in the new nation states in Africa, promoting them as a source of considerable revenue and national prestige for African countries, and stressed that these countries should be supported with financial and technical assistance so as to create enough incentive for installing and funding conservation more permanently as a state responsibility.<sup>189</sup>

In the 1960s, the Western worldview still generally considered Africa as a whole as an ahistorical, apolitical continent, essentially depriving Africa of civilisation, let alone heritage or monuments. In this thinking, African nature and natural heritage were conceptualised over the course of the first half of the twentieth century as part of the neo-colonial discourse, in order to separate Europe, as the sphere of culture and humans, from Africa as the sphere of nature and the divine. African nature presented the imagined antidote to the Western threats of urbanisation and industrialisation in Europe.<sup>190</sup>

There was a conviction that African people could not be trusted to appreciate their own natural heritage enough to conserve it. In the goals and aims of the conference on *Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in modern African States*<sup>191</sup>, it was stated

To a large extent, these great and unique faunal and floral resources could become exhausted merely because the indigenous people had not had adequately demonstrated to them methods to maintain maximum economic and cultural benefits from them. Wildlife is Africa's most neglected but potentially one of its most valuable renewable natural resources, and one that could be wisely utilized for the benefit of countries so fortunate to possess it.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Deese, “New Ecology,” 279, 283.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 278, 288; Wöbse, “Globales,” 139, 140; Schleper, “Life on Earth,” 35, 36.

<sup>190</sup> Horáková, Knowledge Production, 29, 31.

<sup>191</sup> In Arusha, Tanganyika, September, 1961.

<sup>192</sup> Gerald G. Watterson, ed., *Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States - Report of a Symposium Organized by CCTA and IUCN and Held under the Auspices of FAO and UNESCO at Arusha, Tanganyika, September 1961* (Morges: IUCN, 1963), 9.

Combined with the firm belief in organisational solutions to social and ecological problems, many conservation experts approached natural conservation in Africa as a development activity and advertised conservation as a government responsibility, preferably in the form of national parks, as by definition they had to be completely owned and controlled by the government.<sup>193</sup> This often resulted in a hegemonic claim, similar to the development discourse, of international heritage experts and the broader Western public sphere, towards “the inexperienced and short-sighted African governments” to conserve their nature and wildlife as the world's resources, “to prevent one of the few remaining wonders, not only of Africa but of the world, from being totally annihilated through ignorance, savagery and greed.” Through UNESCO's engagement, this discourse around African natural heritage was sanctioned to act as part of the internationalist project of taking responsibility for a universal heritage:

“[...] it remains the task of world organizations [...] to give aid [...] in educating the African people and their leaders [...]. If this aid is not given now, Africa's only *living* monument to the past will be lost forever.”<sup>194</sup>

In the Western tradition of heritage, monuments supported the memory of a community, especially a larger, imagined one, like a nation or a polis, and in a way the idea of a universal heritage manifested the need for monuments by the world community, inspired by internationalists since the 1920s. UNESCO and the international heritage experts provided a framework of defining rules that would allow Western experts to look at historical remains and landscapes everywhere in the world with a “conservator's gaze”, transforming them into heritage that were deemed fit to serve as a memory of the collective past of humankind. Through the establishment of itineraries, maps and lists, and through their successful communication, future sites of World Heritage had been authenticated according to the criteria developed by the scientific experts and as places of collective memory of World History (speaking from a Eurocentric view), furnishing it with the particular “ambivalence of collective identity in the imperial-colonial context”<sup>195</sup> that carried the features over into the development discourse as one of Western hegemony of representation. In the first years of the World Heritage Programme, many sites from so-called developing countries were inscribed despite the provisional state of heritage conservation

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<sup>193</sup> Guillaume Blanc, *Une histoire environnementale de la nation: regards croisés sur les parcs nationaux du Canada, d'Éthiopie et de France* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 2015), 38; Gißibl, Höhler, and Kupper, “Towards,” 12; Salazar, *Envisioning Eden*, 37, 38.

<sup>194</sup> Noreen Curry, “Africa's Wildlife in Peril - Letters to the Editor,” *UNESCO Courier* 14, no. 12 (1961): 33.

<sup>195</sup> Hagen Schulze, “Foreword,” in *Memory, History, and Colonialism - Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), viii.

in many of these countries and applications which were below any acceptable standards. This can easily be understood in the context of UNESCO's role and involvement in ongoing heritage-making activities in these countries going on for many years by the time the World Heritage Convention started its implementation phase in 1978. All of these sites had in common the markers of authenticity in a Western sense, which in many cases meant being monumental.

The expansion of operations in the wake of decolonisation and the development-paradigm shift in the UN were amplified by the effect of UNESCO's image and authenticity production, which mainly concerned a broader public. Creating a universal inventory of heritage sites lent a physical and spatial dimension to the internationalist claim. At the beginning, UNESCO appeared as a lofty intellectual enterprise, confined to a Western discourse and Western problems, albeit with a universal claim. The expansion of activities in the operationalisation phase provided a key territory to which to apply internationalist ideas and promote the claim to universal relevance. Within just a few years, the activities of UNESCO had become global, which made the international sphere a somewhat more solid concept, and made the UN appear as a real space, manifested through the many operations and field offices. UNESCO effectively showcased the internationalist project and furnished it with empirical ground through World Heritage, managing to materialise the international out of its operations in the developing world.

## 2. Ethiopia and UNESCO: a strategic teamwork

This chapter aims to provide an introduction to the sometimes tense, sometimes productive relationship between UNESCO and Ethiopia during the 1960s and 1970s. With this in mind, I will first elaborate on the reciprocal relevance of UNESCO membership for Ethiopia, and show that heritage-related activities formed an important part of the relationship. Then I will highlight some aspects of the nature of the communication between the Ethiopian government and the UNESCO secretariat.

Though Ethiopia was not a conceptual founding member, its connections with UNESCO started early on in the organisation's history and reflected the overall relevance of Ethiopia within the emerging diplomatic landscape of the UN System. During the 1950s Ethiopia became an important node for diplomatic encounters and international organisations to establish relations and operations in Africa. Ethiopia appeared as an eager and early adopter of aid programmes and assistance, a fact which was grounded in a political strategy. Foreign assistance, in particular scientific and administrative expertise, was utilised by the Ethiopian government to compensate for the lack of national experts in building up a modern bureaucratic state infrastructure. The involvement of UNESCO and other international organisations in the establishment of Ethiopia's institutional landscape ensured government authority over the relevant sectors. In particular in the early years, UNESCO also presented an important international stage on which Ethiopian state representatives could perform the country's role as a voice for developing countries in general, and African countries in particular. Conservation-related issues were present almost from the beginning, although activities and projects would only become numerous and impactful in the 1970s. More especially the impact of a seven-year UNDP project for the "Preservation and Presentation of Sites and Monuments"<sup>196</sup> proved highly relevant, preparing a favourable climate and conditions for the nomination of a large number of sites in Ethiopia to become part of the UNESCO World Heritage List. In communication and cooperation, the interests of UNESCO and its representatives and those of the Ethiopian government were at times mutual and at times in collision. Navigating these tensions and remaining in control of projects presented a challenge and shaped the impact and outcome of many projects.

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<sup>196</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014 Terminal Report.

## 2.1 UNESCO's interest in Ethiopia

Ethiopia was considered a key location and state within the emerging UN landscape, and recruiting Ethiopia as a member state was therefore a priority for UNESCO during the 1950s. As the organisation was able to provide more substantial development funds from the 1960s on, Ethiopia was built up as a model country for development cooperation.

### **Ethiopia's relevance as a diplomatic hub**

Ethiopia joined UNESCO in 1955, as confirmed by a telegram<sup>197</sup> sent by Akalework Habtewold, Minister of Education in the Ethiopian Imperial Government at the time. This moment had been preceded by three years of diplomatic efforts from UNESCO's side. Ethiopia was among the developing countries which UNESCO secretariat staff began to tour in the 1950s, after the busy first years of foundation, so as to "sell their cause"<sup>198</sup>. As opposed to many other developing countries at the time, especially those in Africa, Ethiopia was not a newly emerging nation undergoing a decolonisation process, as it had always remained free from significant periods of colonial rule. During the period of Italian occupation between 1935 and 1941, emperor Haile Selassie I secured Ethiopia's spot in the international community by appealing to the League of Nations for support. While his speech did little to impede Italian aggression, it earned Ethiopia a certain standing in international organisations, specifically in the UN, of which it eventually became one of the founding member states in 1946.<sup>199</sup>

Ethiopia unquestionably had an influential role in the emerging international relations landscape of the UN, demonstrated for example by it holding one of the first African Group's seats in the UN Security Council from 1967-68. This was paralleled by the government's proactive appearance within all the UN's special agencies. By 1954, Ethiopia had already been a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the FAO, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the World Bank, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and several other international organisations, and the UNESCO secretariat did not intend to fall short in this regard.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Telegram from Akalework Habtewold to UNESCO, 26.5.1955, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

<sup>198</sup> Note from DG after meeting with Dr. Naidu (BRX), 19.5.53, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

<sup>199</sup> Christopher Clapham, "The Era of Haile Selassie," in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London, 2015), 191-96.

<sup>200</sup> Note from René Maheu to René Chevalier, 26.8.54, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

There was another aspect leading to the UNESCO secretariat rating Ethiopia's membership in the organisation as particularly relevant. Ethiopia's special status as a key player in African and international relations set it apart from other countries. With the inauguration of the Africa Hall compound as the headquarters for the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Addis Ababa in 1961, Ethiopia's relevance to the UN system gained significant strategic importance. The UN and most of the UN special agencies installed liaison offices within the compound and this secured for the country a default proximity to diplomatic interactions. To ensure a close working relationship with other UN agencies regarding the coordination of projects, UNESCO needed a presence in Addis Ababa as well. The issues contained under the mandate of several international organisations presented urgent and obvious fields of action for the Ethiopian government, such as food and health and development funding and finances. This engagement directly contributed to solving the country's most urgent problems.<sup>201</sup> As far as UNESCO was concerned, this kind of opportunity did not seem evident to the Ethiopian government, partially reflecting the young organisation's weak international standing and the overall low relevance of UNESCO's mandate on the international stage in the 1950s.<sup>202</sup> In the official correspondence, the Ethiopian government's responses to the initial approaches for membership were very hesitant, questioning the possible benefits in comparison with the expected budget contribution. In response, UNESCO secretariat staff stressed in numerous attempts, by letter and during a personal visit, the areas of potential collaboration. They emphasised the advantages for Ethiopia, which would include not only collaboration on the issues under UNESCO's mandate, but also the possibility of receiving assistance with them.<sup>203</sup>

### **Diplomatic misunderstanding**

Eventually Ethiopia decided to join UNESCO, as education was declared a political priority, and UNESCO seemed like a promising channel to receive international support for the educational sector.<sup>204</sup> This promotion of technical and financial assistance on UNESCO's part led to some initial diplomatic tensions. Since UNESCO membership had been advertised to the Ethiopian government with a focus on the possibility of receiving funding and assistance, immediately after attaining membership the Ethiopian government start-

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<sup>201</sup> Theodor C. P. Lilliefelt, "United Nation's Technical Assistance," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 9 (1958): 290-93.

<sup>202</sup> Maurel, *Histoire*, 179, 180.

<sup>203</sup> Note from André de Blonay to Camille Aboussouan, 1.7.1952, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

<sup>204</sup> Letter from René Maheu to Akalework Habtewold, 5.7.1955, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

ed applying extensively for assistance.<sup>205</sup> Ethiopian delegates and government representatives quickly expressed disappointment with the amount of available assistance, which appeared low in comparison with the funds available through other international organisations. On the other hand, UNESCO secretariat staff, upon visiting the country, found the organisation's purpose misunderstood and insufficiently respected in this outspoken attitude. The approach of the Ethiopian government was considered a "shocking" misconception of UNESCO as a development aid agency on the Ethiopian side<sup>206</sup>.

Nonetheless, UNESCO could not afford to stay on tense terms with Ethiopia. A diplomatic visit by the DG René Maheu in 1968, which included several formal and ceremonial meetings with the Emperor Haile Selassie I, strengthened the ties between Ethiopia and UNESCO, resulting in an *aide-memoire* in 1971 which consisted of an agreement to grow, on the one hand, UNESCO's assistance to Ethiopia, and on the other hand, Ethiopia's structural efforts and dedication to implement UNESCO's programme.<sup>207</sup>

These meetings proved fruitful also for UNESCO to have its general strategy physically present in Addis Ababa, eventually manifested through the appointment of a liaison officer and a regional social science field office in Addis Ababa at the beginning of the 1960s. Field offices, like the one in Addis Ababa, were aimed at balancing out global disadvantages by providing "assistance for researchers working in all regions remote from the main centres of scientific and technical activity, in particular by establishing contacts with colleagues in countries in those regions and providing them with the information and documentation they lacked"<sup>208</sup>, reflecting the view of the UNESCO secretariat that the organisation was to strengthen its position, outreach and possibilities for cooperation, specifically in developing countries.

In sum, René Maheu's visit to Ethiopia demonstrated how from the beginning the relationship between Ethiopia and UNESCO surpassed the status of a routine diplomatic effort. Instead, the terms of the relationship illuminated the complexity and degree of entanglement between the work of international civil servants and government institutions, permeating the UN system from the start.<sup>209</sup> The working climate between UNESCO headquarters the UNESCO and UNDP regional offices and the Ethiopian government remained productive over several decades, primarily because of strong diplomatic ties, and a mutual dependence on operational works as well as strategical purpose.

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<sup>205</sup> Especially in the educational sector, by far the largest area of collaboration and activity between UNESCO and Ethiopia, numerous requests were submitted; letter from Malcolm Adiseshiah to Roger Barnes, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. i.

<sup>206</sup> Report of a visit to Addis by Dr. Adiseshiah in 8/1958, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. i.

<sup>207</sup> Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, *UNESCO in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Commercial Printing Press, n. y.), 15.

<sup>208</sup> Conil-Lacoste, *Story*, 35.

<sup>209</sup> Hadwen and Kaufmann, *United Nations*, 9, 64.

Effectively, with the developing countries' growing requests and the funds at UNESCO's disposal to respond to them, UNESCO turned from a more intellectual organisation into an operational one. Ethiopia acted in a guiding role for African and developing countries on the international stage during the development decade. Thus, securing Ethiopia as a member state was essential for UNESCO to contribute to the global development discourse during the 1950s and 1960s. The field office in Addis Ababa enabled UNESCO to be physically present at *the* location of most strategic importance to international development cooperation in Africa.

## 2.2 Ethiopia's interest in UNESCO

The role of UNESCO as an aid agency for Ethiopia was a defining characteristic of the relationship between the two, shaping to a great extent the history of the country's role within the organisation.

The genesis of the Ethiopian institutional landscape during the 1960s and 70s was characterised by aggravating political and social conflicts. During this time frame, Ethiopia underwent a process of state transformation and centralisation of state power. In the end, the government of Emperor Haile Selassie I failed, along with his attempts to bring all opposing political forces in the country under his leadership, and the imperial government was overturned by a socialist revolution in 1974. Existing systems of land tenure and administration were gradually and forcefully replaced by a bureaucratic state organisation, under both the imperial and the socialist governments, resulting in a large scale restructuring of political and economic resources in favour of a new ruling class that emerged in, and was centred around, Addis Ababa. Territorial conflicts in the region necessitated a further centralisation of power and an aggressively nationalist agenda emerged to maintain what was nonetheless a frail political unity.<sup>210</sup>

Due to this process of change and modernisation, the Ethiopian state had a growing need of foreign expertise, as it was faced with an extreme shortage of any trained specialists in the country. The impetus to expand institutional bureaucracy was difficult to put in practice, and the few Ethiopian civil servants and politicians who had received adequate training, or had obtained a degree from a European or American university, were facing workloads and demands on them for expertise that were increasingly difficult to handle.

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<sup>210</sup> Cf. the more detailed analysis in ch. 4; works with a particular focus on the institutional development of the Ethiopian government include: Christopher Clapham, *Haile-Selassie's Government* (New York: Praeger, 1969); Christopher Clapham, *Transformation and Continuity in Revolutionary Ethiopia*, 61 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1988); Margery Perham, *The Government of Ethiopia*, 2. ed. (London: Faber & Faber, 1969); Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1991* (Oxford [England]; Athens; Addis Ababa: James Curry; Ohio University Press; Addis Ababa University Press, 2001).



## Foreign experts in Ethiopia: key actors for state modernisation and diplomacy

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, when Emperor Menelik II had started to construct Addis Ababa as the new capital of the Ethiopian empire, the permanent requirement of foreign advisors had become a key element in the operational basis of the Ethiopian imperial government, in all aspects.<sup>211</sup> A result of this integration of foreign experts into the government in Ethiopia was that knowledge production, necessary to build up a functional bureaucratic state infrastructure in Ethiopia, was institutionalised according to Western academic and bureaucratic traditions and became increasingly more dependent on foreign funds and on foreign expertise.<sup>212</sup> According to the general statistics, published by the Ministry of Education for 1951/1953, 1755 Ethiopian employees are listed for the Ministry of Education and 233 foreign employees.<sup>213</sup>

The critical lack of skilled manpower in Ethiopia can easily be explained by the fact that the country's first university was only opened in 1950—the Haile Selassie I (HSI) University, in 1974 renamed as Addis Ababa University. In parallel to the late arrival of this first institution of higher education, the extremely minimal system of secular secondary education available at the time was expanded as a part of Haile Selassie I's development plans.<sup>214</sup> The introduction and development of higher and secondary education was designed by Western education experts and modelled after Western schools, and conducted entirely in the English language. In the beginning, experts in higher education, mainly from Canada, managed a staff of largely European and US American professors and lecturers, who taught arts and humanities, natural sciences, engineering, economics, and law to primary cohorts of a few hundred students in total.<sup>215</sup> In these first years, the number of Ethiopian students studying abroad, as part of the overseas study programme of the imperial government, was still exceeding the number of domestic students by more than 60%. After ten years however, by 1960, the number of students at HSI University had grown

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<sup>211</sup> Perham, *Government*, 59, 60.

<sup>212</sup> Barnett and Finnemore, *Rules*, 34.

<sup>213</sup> Ethiopia, ed., *Year Book* (Addis Ababa, 1950), 208; These figures did not include school teachers of which most were foreign, for example from the Peace Corps.

<sup>214</sup> Until the opening of the first government school, secondary education was only available in religious institutions. N. N., "The University College of Addis Ababa (Editorial)," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 6 (1958): 195–213; Sylvia Pankhurst, "Education in Ethiopia: Secondary Education," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 5 (1958): 162–64; In 1958 there were 22 secondary schools altogether in Ethiopia, including the British and French Schools installed, which served the population of international experts and diplomats as well as the Ethiopian upper class.

<sup>215</sup> Randi Rønning Balsvik, *Haile Selassie's Students: The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution, 1952-1977* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; East Lansing, Mich.: Addis Ababa University Press; African Studies Center, Michigan State University, in cooperation with the Norwegian Council of Science and the Humanities, 2005), 21–31; N., "The University College of Addis Ababa (Editorial)," 196.

significantly, and by 1968, more than 4000 students were enrolled at the University in Addis, as opposed to 2000 students studying abroad.<sup>216</sup>

In these circumstances during the 1950s and 1960s, it seemed untenable to produce the amount of skilled manpower in Ethiopia necessary to amend the skills-shortage in the country. The Ethiopian state administrative infrastructure continued to depend on Ethiopian nationals who had received overseas training— a privilege, despite the instituted overseas studies programme, of primarily the upper classes who had the financial means to pay not only for their studies at a foreign university, but also for secondary level education at one of the European private schools in Addis Ababa. In this context, foreign expertise was indispensable to the state so as to cover even basic bureaucratic functionality and state responsibilities.<sup>217</sup>

The fastest way to increase skilled manpower so as to sustain the bureaucratic infrastructure was to directly hire foreign advisors that could serve in institutions across all branches of the government. To achieve this, cooperation and agreements with international organisations or on a bilateral basis were sought after in a wide variety of fields. During the 1960s and 1970s foreign experts and consultants became an increasingly important group of actors in the governmental and political development of Ethiopia.<sup>218</sup> The number of foreign actors involved in knowledge production and distribution steadily increased as a result of politically strategic efforts. The majority of development investment and assistance was sourced through bilateral cooperation, such as via the American Point Four Program, via British aid to Ethiopia and Swedish development aid.<sup>219</sup> This strategy is easy to understand as a continuation of the presence foreign advisers to the government as a central institution.<sup>220</sup> International organisations, their expertise, and their assistance programmes, formed part and parcel of the expansion of the bureaucratic infrastructure in Ethiopia. The effort to transform the Ethiopian empire into a constitutional monarchy with a bureaucratic apparatus was linked productively with the expansion and increasing operationalisation of international organisations during the 1960s and 1970s.

In this regard, the option of being a member of UNESCO became of interest as soon as it was clear that it would promise the Ethiopian government further access to funds and

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<sup>216</sup> N. N., "Ethiopian Overseas Study," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 6 (1958): 222; Teshome G. Wagaw, "Access to Haile Selassie I University," *Ethiopia Observer* 19, no. 1 (1971): 39.

<sup>217</sup> N.C. Angus, "The Imperial Ethiopian Institute of Public Administration," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 9 (1958): 312-15.

<sup>218</sup> Clapham, *Government*, 103-7; Anne-Marie Jacomy-Millette, "Anatomie d'un pays en voie de développement à la lumière de ses engagements internationaux : le cas de l'éthiopie," *Revue générale de droit international public* 4 (1974): 1026-36.

<sup>219</sup> Harold G. Marcus, "Haile Selassie's Development Policies and Views 1916-1960," in *Études Éthiopiennes, Vol. I. Actes de La Xe Conférence Internationale Des Études Éthiopiennes, Paris, 24-28 Aout 1988*, ed. Claude Lepage (Paris, 1994), 646.

<sup>220</sup> Perham, *Government*, 92-95.

expertise, in particular for the field of education. UNESCO presented an opportunity to acquire assistance in those fields that seemed less immediate but were nonetheless strategically important to development in the long run, such as science, culture and communication. Throughout all their efforts and statements, the Ethiopian delegates stressed their guiding priority, in regard to Ethiopia's membership in UNESCO, to be in "education and science, because these two areas constitute the primary foundation for development."<sup>221</sup> The efficient and strategic use of UNESCO experts as a resource for the Ethiopian state becomes evident from a survey of the high number of requests that the Ethiopian government submitted to UNESCO's Participation Programme and other programmes in all sectors in the 1970s: education, science, social sciences, human sciences and culture, and communication.<sup>222</sup> Exemplary numbers illustrate the density of foreign aid through UNESCO to Ethiopia during this period: between 1968 and 1970 alone, 42 UNESCO missions took place in Ethiopia, among them four major projects, financed by UNDP and executed by UNESCO. Between 1950 and 1971, 101 UNESCO fellowships were awarded. The main fields of assistance were education and science. Other fields included heritage conservation and communication.<sup>223</sup> Statistics show that the general amount of technical assistance to Ethiopia rose to over 35 Million USD per year until 1972.<sup>224</sup> Technical infrastructure, education, economic development, natural and agricultural resources, and health were the key areas of development cooperation and technical assistance. In all these areas, foreign expertise was key to the institutionalisation and establishment of the relevant bureaucracy. Cultural politics and heritage-making were also established in this context.

### **Practical difficulties of international cooperation**

Initially however, establishing collaboration with UNESCO on a practical level was difficult for Ethiopian government agencies. Providing appropriate counterparts in the government for actual contact with specific divisions of the UNESCO secretariat and a national commission for UNESCO, as required by the organisation in order to implement

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<sup>221</sup> H.E. Mr. Seifu Mahteme Selassie's speech to the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference 1970, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vi.

<sup>222</sup> Examples include requests for: Assistance for Amharic Language study, Equipment for Recording, Assistance for Organisation of Pan-African Pre-History Congress, Assistance to Organise Congress of Ethiopian Studies, Fellowship in Archives, Fellowship in Mass Media Education, Workshop on Book Development; Letter of approval of requests, 7.5.71, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) A 136.

<sup>223</sup> Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, *UNESCO in Ethiopia*, 18.

<sup>224</sup> This figure is excluding assistance to defence, not counting the very large number of fellowships financed from external sources and not including contributions by small donors such as religious and other voluntary organisations, which were presumed to be large but not assessable; UNDP, "Report on Development Assistance to Ethiopia in 1972 - Prepared by the Resident Representative of the UNDP in Ethiopia," 1972, i.

the assistance projects effectively, proved to be challenging. The staff assigned to form an advisory committee in order to prepare the National Commission were regularly overwhelmed with the workload involved.<sup>225</sup> After more than ten years, the advisory committee was eventually transformed into a National Commission for UNESCO in 1967, strengthening the collaboration in ongoing projects as well as advancing the matter of the visit of UNESCO's DG René Maheu.<sup>226</sup>

Specialised knowledge and manpower were lacking in any field involving modern technologies, including printing, publishing, archiving and organising.<sup>227</sup> Even basic office staff were not always available—in 1967 the UNESCO chief of mission had to handwrite all of his correspondence for a period of several months, as there was “not a single stenographer” in the entire Ministry of Education to support him.<sup>228</sup>

It was difficult to meet the basic requirements necessary to function at a minimum standard at the level of an international organisation because supplies were not available or equipment was very expensive. For example, the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO had to request equipment and stationary supplies from UNESCO itself.<sup>229</sup> In addition to the lack of material equipment and the poor availability of office supplies, for many Ethiopian officials dealing with UNESCO, even those employed in the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, it was impossible to acquire a closer personal experience of large parts of UNESCO's activities and practical work routine as it seemed impossible for the Ethiopian government to fund them to go to Europe. The Ethiopian government regularly submitted requests to the Participation Programme to enable the government agencies to better collaborate with UNESCO and other international organisations. Among the aid requests was an international study grant for the Secretary General of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO “to study the experiences in the different Sectors and Divisions of UNESCO on [sic] project preparation, monitoring and evaluation”<sup>230</sup> and a grant for financial support for the building of a public library and documentation centre for UN-related issues in the offices of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO.<sup>231</sup>

The lack of materials and equipment made it difficult for the institutions to operate, and the material and equipment bought within individual projects could often not be maintained adequately or be replaced when outdated. The Centre for Research and Conserva-

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<sup>225</sup> The establishment of the National Commission is easy to trace in the correspondence in UNESCO X07.21 (63) NC.

<sup>226</sup> Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, *UNESCO in Ethiopia*, 15.

<sup>227</sup> Letter from Sergew Hable Selassie to Sir L. Kirwan, 29.1.1973, SOAS, Kirwan Papers Box 4, file 3-70.

<sup>228</sup> Letter from Mr. Green to Mr. Terenzio, no date, UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iii.

<sup>229</sup> Request for equipment and stationary supplies, 29.12.1983, in: UNESCO BRX AFR 4.

<sup>230</sup> Letter from Abdulmenan Ahmed to J. Kabore, 9.1.1984, in: UNESCO BRX AFR 4.

<sup>231</sup> Participation Programme request from 29 Dec 1983, to be considered in 1984, in: UNESCO BRX AFR 4.

tion of Cultural Heritage (CRCCH),<sup>232</sup> for example, was entrusted with the inventory and documentation of movable and immovable cultural heritage. As such, it had a photograph section which served both as a documentation centre and a source of information for educational and research activities. This section was supposed to play an important role in the promotional activities planned in connection with an international UNESCO campaign to preserve the monuments and sites of Ethiopia. When approaching the planning stage of the campaign, the equipment was deemed to be too old and thus inadequate to meet the demands for its services.<sup>233</sup> The difficulty of the work of the photography division can be illustrated by noting that no colour film or adequate processing was available in Ethiopia at that time. Through the international conservation projects under UNESCO and UNDP, the necessary means to obtain the material were available in theory. Yet, with the project account only allowed to operate in Ethiopian dollars, no ordering of material from overseas was possible either.<sup>234</sup>

The challenges that developing countries like Ethiopia faced in the emerging UN Development and Assistance bureaucracy were not unknown to the UNESCO secretariat. In fact, to establish the various UNESCO programmes of assistance, UNESCO's civil servants were supposed to offer guidance and, where appropriate, initiate requests, i.e. suggest their initiation to a national delegation. UNESCO divisions then offered help to review the submitted requests so as to ensure their approval, and would often hand back a request with detailed instruction about how to rewrite the request and redefine the goal towards this end.<sup>235</sup> This was deemed necessary, not only to maintain the correct bureaucratic procedure, but to ensure the use of funds provided within the budget period they were made available.

### **Ethiopia as a voice for developing and African countries in UNESCO**

Being aware of its special position within the UN system, Ethiopian delegates also understood themselves to be uniquely positioned as spokespeople for developing and African, countries as a whole. Based on their experiences in development cooperation and Ethiopia's special political status as Africa's only non-colonised nation, they pushed for changes in the general structure of the organisation as well as in individual programme areas of

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<sup>232</sup> The government authority responsible for conservation, see ch. 3.

<sup>233</sup> Request for inventory of immovable and movable cultural heritage (provision of equipment), 29 dec 1983, in: UNESCO BRX AFR 4.

<sup>234</sup> Note from E. Olsen to Mr. D. Lindowski (Field Equipment and Subcontracting Division of UNESCO), 22.5.1978, in UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. vi.

<sup>235</sup> See for example the offer to assist in further requests for the ETH 74/14 project, containing detailed instructions on the correct order of steps and authorities to involve on the Ethiopian side in the letter from A. Pasquali to Tesfaye Shewaye, concerning the progress of the campaign planning, 20.1.1981, in: UNESCO 069 (63) AMS.

UNESCO, and contributed conceptually to a number of policies and programmes within UNESCO.

Ethiopia, according to their own understanding, was predestined to act as a voice representing developing, and especially African, countries.<sup>236</sup> Haile Selassie I's pre-existing and prevalent relationship with the UN as well as the apparent political stability of Ethiopia compared to other African states at the time, made Addis Ababa a preferred location to install the headquarters for the UNECA. The state's gesture of donating both the compound and several modern representative buildings designed for over 300 UN employees, with offices and a conference venue, Africa Hall, was supposed to demonstrate Ethiopia's capacities as an internationally and regionally-important place. Equally important to the state was Ethiopia's aspiration to play a leading role in the Pan-African movement and other regional African liberation movements, resulting in the headquarters of the Organisation of African Unity being installed in Addis Ababa in 1963.<sup>237</sup>

Along the lines of this strategic framework, Ethiopia ensured the provision of political and conceptual input to UNESCO's programme through influential Ethiopian personalities in UNESCO's General Assembly. Not long after Ethiopia formally joined UNESCO as a member state, Akalework Habtewold, former Ethiopian Ambassador to France and then Minister of Education and Fine Arts, and later Minister of Justice in the imperial government, would become the first African President of the UNESCO General Assembly from 1960-1962.<sup>238</sup> He functioned as head of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO and the Ethiopian delegation to UNESCO, both roles installed within the government by legal proclamation in 1964, and filled with a rank of government officials, mainly from the Ministry of Education.<sup>239</sup>

A closer look at day-to-day operations at UNESCO Headquarters during the period 1960-1980 illustrates how the working reality of UNESCO as a predominantly European institution might have fostered an urgent need for representation by the first African personalities in UNESCO. Despite the strong representation of Ethiopia in the Programme activities and meetings, there were not many Ethiopians among the staff of UNESCO, and repeated attempts by the Ethiopian Delegation to amend this situation were declined by the secretariat on several occasions. The secretariat justified this by claiming a lack of competence on the candidate's side or the unavailability of suitable positions.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Haile Selassie I, "Address to the Ethiopian Parliament, November 2nd, 1958," *Ethiopia Observer* 3, no. 3 (1959): 68; Richard Pankhurst, "Ethiopia and the African Personality," *Ethiopia Observer* 3, no. 3 (1959): 70.

<sup>237</sup> Perham, *Government*, I; N. N., "Economic Commission for Africa," *Ethiopia Observer* 2, no. 9 (1958): 317.

<sup>238</sup> Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, *UNESCO in Ethiopia*, 14.

<sup>239</sup> Bulletin of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, May 1969, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) NC.

<sup>240</sup> There are several items of correspondence and internal notes regarding the subject matter in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. ii; the justifications for not employing Ethiopian nationals in the UNESCO secretariat appear vague and worth further investigation from today's viewpoint.

Ethiopian delegates at the time argued that the cause of the general structural imbalance in the UN system was the inappropriately marginal position of African countries in particular. To this end the Ethiopian delegation to UNESCO, declaratively speaking on behalf of the group of developing countries, acted at the forefront in promoting more UNESCO regional centres and field offices to be installed so as to enable quicker communication. The installation of regional offices, and the decentralisation of UNESCO's administration and operations, was supposed to render the central position of the UNESCO headquarters in Paris less relevant over time, according to the Ethiopian position. Based on their experiences through the numerous assistance projects, the Ethiopian delegation had, for several years, advocated a decentralisation of UNESCO and an increase in the number of regional offices and centres to balance out the inefficiency of many of UNESCO's actions in developing countries that often required "constant and close follow-up" and "quick on the spot action based on adequate experience and knowledge of the area".<sup>241</sup>

## **2.3 UNESCO-Ethiopian communication and cooperation**

From the beginning, the strategic outlook of both sides clearly shaped the relationship between the Ethiopian government and the UNESCO secretariat and influenced the implementation of policies and programmes. This strategic approach is reflected in their official communication, characterised by efforts to allow for an equal encounter in an overall imbalanced situation. In this regard, the relationship between Ethiopia and UNESCO is exemplary of the situation of developing countries in the UN during the 1960s and 1970s. In the communication between the Ethiopian government and the UNESCO headquarters, as well as the Addis Ababa UNESCO and UNDP field offices, both sides actively influenced the speed and the efficacy of communication as a way to remain in control.

The relationship between Ethiopia and UNESCO had an uneasy start and was characterised by unfulfilled mutual expectations of cooperation and engagement. The first two years would see more difficulties in establishing effective communication channels between UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the first UNESCO missions sent to the country and the Ministry of Education and the Ethiopian Delegation to UNESCO. Communication problems evolved around practical questions as well as around proper protocol and diplomatic hierarchy.

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<sup>241</sup> H.E. Mr. Seifu Mahteme Selassie's speech to the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference 1970, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vi.

## General conditions and problems of communication

The expansion of operations from 1966 on, when UNESCO was made an executing agency of the UNDP, necessitated an increase in communication and brought with it challenges for UNESCO and the other agencies involved, like the UNDP, as well as for the Ethiopian government and its administration.<sup>242</sup> The ability to cope with this challenge, however, resulted in a structural disadvantage on the Ethiopian side, because while UNDP's and UNESCO's bureaucracy was, despite some difficulties, in large parts able to expand and accommodate, the Ethiopian government and administration were not, as they were already struggling with the existing situation.

The technology available to facilitate the growing demand in communication, which could often be a time consuming effort, presented an additional factor affecting the speed and efficiency of communication. While telegrams were a way of communicating important decisions relatively quickly across the globe, and more important items of correspondence could be airmailed within a day or two, the majority of regular correspondence, and the rapidly expanding amount of informational material, newspapers and magazines that were circulating between UNESCO headquarters in Paris and the field offices and national commissions, was confined to regular mail, which took an average of two weeks between, for example, Ethiopia and France. Added to that were the times of handling within the institution— in many cases, the date of shipment of a letter was 14 days or more after the date of issue. From the Ethiopian perspective, communication was expensive and difficult because of the technical standards on the ground and the supply situation. From the request for equipment and stationary supplies for the offices of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO in 1983, we learn that supplies such as duplicating and photocopy paper, as well as ink, were not available locally, and that an Amharic typewriter cost \$1800.<sup>243</sup>

The degree of elaboration of the bureaucratic hierarchy and organisation of the UNESCO bureaucrats, as well as their level of training and expertise, was much higher than that of the Ethiopian ones. Additionally, in Ethiopia at the time, not only were skilled government workers a limited resource due to barely existent higher education, expertise was often not the deciding factor in assigning a position to a bureaucrat, but rather loyalty to the government. In effect, “the lack of method in handling official papers [constituted]

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<sup>242</sup> Murphy, *UNDP*, 139–48; the organisational growth also resulted in a kind of bureaucratic collapse of the UNESCO secretariat in Paris, Maurel, *Histoire*, 58–87.

<sup>243</sup> Request for equipment and stationary supplies, 29.12.1983, in: UNESCO BRX AFR 4.



one of the great weaknesses of the Ethiopian government.”<sup>244</sup> These difficulties further slowed down the communication processes between the UNESCO secretariat and the Ethiopian administration and government agencies considerably.

In principle, UNESCO was able to scale operations according to need, as the flow of communication was somewhat vital to the organisation’s expansion process during the 1960s. As part of the UN system, UNESCO staff were entitled to use privileged modes of communication, such as sending mail via diplomatic pouches. For the staff in field offices, this meant faster, more frequent and better access to information, than some branches of the Ethiopian administration. When it came to the implementation of policies and assistance programmes in Ethiopia, which presented the main aspect of UNESCO-Ethiopian relations, UNESCO had in many ways a more advantageous position and benefitted from a system of communication that played in its favour and ensured a steady workflow.

However, this imbalance did not necessarily result in a weaker position for the Ethiopian government, since, in many instances, delays in communication caused by the Ethiopian side ensured that Ethiopia retained an appropriate level of control, especially in regard to a positive or favourable image of the country in the international public sphere. Given that the majority of the cooperation was based on technical assistance and development funding, government authorities sought to ensure that the distribution of reports and data that would represent the progress of economic and social development in an unfavourable light were restricted or had their distribution slowed or curbed.<sup>245</sup>

Despite the impetus in place and the official policy to strategically use the expertise of international organisations to help foster a modern bureaucratic state infrastructure, in reality the collaboration didn't always flow smoothly or in a particularly organised manner. One of the main difficulties in the interaction with the Ethiopian government was establishing correct procedure and addressing the appropriate institution responsible for handling UNESCO. As in many other countries, the initial contact point (and later the UNESCO National Commission for Ethiopia) was set up within the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education was supposed to be the main and only agency through which UNESCO operated in Ethiopia, even though many projects were related to completely different areas of concern. In both practice and reality, that led to a complicated situation in which the ministry was often bypassed and it was almost impossible to gain an overview of all projects conducted by UNESCO. Due to the broad scope and the varied nature of UNESCO’s mandate, projects often concerned the responsibilities of several ministries of state, but inter-ministerial communication proved to be largely insufficient. The com-

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<sup>244</sup> M.A. Maybury, Summary of work undertaken between October 1968 and July 1970, p. 2, in SOAS Maybury Papers, Box 2, No. 30-35; Letter from Clifford Green to Mr. Terenzio, 18.11.66, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iii;

<sup>245</sup> Memo from A. Elliott to DG, 27.1.1969, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. v.

partmentalised structure of authority in the Ethiopian imperial state, which effectively meant that there was never a direct line of influence from a higher level of authority down to the lowest but rather only to the next one down, made the implementation of international assistance difficult and the process longwinded. Rivalries between different ministries of state, as well as an atmosphere of mistrust between the parliament and the executive branches of the government, dominated the administrative situation in Addis Ababa during the late 1960s and often inhibited general political productivity.<sup>246</sup>

Besides its advantages in communication and capacities, UNESCO, too, was understaffed for the scope of the tasks and projects at hand. The bureaucratic structure and transparency in multilateral cooperation presented an ongoing challenge in administration and implementation, resulting in chronic practical misunderstandings and communication problems. Often enough, already providing for administrative matters of the UNESCO and UNDP staff and experts, in order to allow them to execute their assignment in Ethiopia, such as visas, identity cards, salary, driving licenses, was beyond the capacities of the regional office in Addis Ababa.<sup>247</sup>

As different divisions of UNESCO had started to entertain individual correspondence with different branches of the Ethiopian government, it was difficult to gain an overview of the numerous activities, institutions and people responsible involved.

UNESCO gives the appearance of running several different, uncoordinated programs in Ethiopia. Quite apart from the regular ongoing programs in the Ministry of Education, there seem to be at least two science programs, one of which is conducted in cooperation with the faculties of science and engineering at the University and the other with the wildlife conservation department. There is also a conservation of monuments program under which there is direct communication with the Ministry of Planning and Development (see my letter to Mr. Daifuku). The Ministry of Education does not seem to have been involved at all in the mission of Mr. Howland last year until after it was completed.<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> M.A. Maybury, Summary of work undertaken between October 1968 and July 1970, p. 1, in SOAS Maybury Papers, Box 2, No. 30-35; Letter from A. Elliott to Mr. Terenzio, 12.9.69, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. v; Kjetil Tronvoll, *War & the Politics of Identity in Ethiopia: Making Enemies & Allies in the Horn of Africa* (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, NY: James Currey, 2009), 33, 34.

<sup>247</sup> Points for Discussion at Chiefs of Mission Meeting, 24 November 1969, in: UNESCO X07.21 (63) pt. v, 5, 6.

<sup>248</sup> Letter from Alan Elliott to M. Dookingue, 27.3.1968, UNESCO X07.21 (63) pt. iv.

## **The power of having the last word: the Ethiopian government's control over UNESCO operations**

Despite the extent of foreign assistance, the Ethiopian government maintained control of the affected processes of application at most times and played a proactive role in requesting assistance. Controlling the extensive international development projects was highly effective for the Ethiopian government because initial requests and final approval of a ministry or a government agency (like the antiquities or wildlife administration) were conditional to all operations of UNESCO and other UN agencies in Ethiopia. In order to hire experts for the projects in Ethiopia the Ethiopian government had to make a formal request for a specific type of expert. UNESCO and other international organisations then searched for which experts were suitable to fill the needs and which were available. In the following step, UNESCO submitted two or three candidates for approval to the respective Ethiopian government counterpart institution. The employment of the expert then remained conditional on the Ethiopian government's final approval. Frequently, the Ethiopian government rejected proposed candidates due to either a lack of qualifications, or an inappropriate match of qualifications to the job profile.<sup>249</sup> On more than one occasion, this final recruitment procedural step imposed by the Ethiopian administration was criticised and identified by UNESCO as the main bottleneck slowing the progress of projects.<sup>250</sup> The Ethiopian government, both imperial and socialist, was very eager and strict in terms of demanding correct protocol in exchanges with UNESCO, and if considered necessary, simply brought ongoing projects to a halt if they perceived any changes had been made without running through the correct channels. In the sensitive and representative issue of the national museum, which was largely built based on foreign expertise acquired through UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture made sure to be, at least formally, in charge of the process at all times, even at the expense of opening the museum in time. The British Museum's consultant P. A. Cole-King had to return empty-handed from his first mission to produce a museum catalogue, because the specifics and scope of the catalogue production had been altered by the cultural heritage department of UNESCO without seeking approval from the Ethiopian Ministry of Culture beforehand.<sup>251</sup> Since abandoning the project was an option UNESCO could not afford after being so heavily invested in Ethiopia, the Ethiopian government, using this fact as a bargaining chip, was in a powerful position to control the projects.

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<sup>249</sup> There are several examples among the correspondence in UNESCO X07.21 (63), pt. ii.

<sup>250</sup> Report Patrick Bulenzi of mission to Ethiopia 8-15.6.79, in UNESCO 069:72 (63), UNDP pt. viii.

<sup>251</sup> Letter from P.A. Cole-King to Patrick Bulenzi, 19.12.1974, in: UNESCO 069 (63) AMS.

Because agreements and requests related to UNESCO happened at an administrative level that was, officially as well as informally, not practically connected to activities at the regional levels where projects were to be implemented, it was typical that, until all the necessary bureaucratic steps on the Ethiopian side had been completed and all necessary information and project data gathered, the budgetary timeframe of the original request would often be exceeded or the conditions of the assistance programmes themselves would have changed, which required a revision of the request and a repeat of the long-winded process from the start.<sup>252</sup>

In fact, however, only very few instances give the impression that this situation was a result of incompetence.<sup>253</sup> It appears that there was actually some expertise within the Ethiopian administration regarding how to juggle, interweave and combine the different funding available to achieve specific project goals. It was not so much inefficiency or incompetence that delayed processes of communication, but rather the political decision to insist on a hierarchical protocol being maintained which demanded always going through the highest level in every case, small or large. Final approval by the emperor or a minister remained mandatory for most projects and follow-up decisions within the project. This installed a natural limitation to operations that was often in conflict with the timeline of budget periods as approved by the executive organs of the international organisations, and in many cases slowed down the progress of operations and assistance projects.<sup>254</sup> This was an effective, if unintentional way of slowing things down, determining that the international organisation's work could not progress too quickly and so bring a danger of encroaching too much upon the government and administration, or develop too much momentum of its own as a potential parallel regime.

For the Ethiopian government, insisting on the strict centralised hierarchy in all matters of communication was not only a question of taking charge and maintaining control of the situation, but was also a question of stabilising and maintaining centralised power and governance from within. The heritage-making projects, for example, included conservation activities, mainly at heritage sites in the northern part of the country, some of them contested territories.<sup>255</sup> For the Ethiopian government it was preferable not to tolerate any direct interactions between the local authorities and the foreign experts, especially as

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<sup>252</sup> See for example the process of hiring a Chief Technical Advisor and funding the fellowships for the ETH/74/014 project in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. i.

<sup>253</sup> The secretary General of the Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO complained about having received incomplete CVs for consultant posts, when in fact she had just overlooked the fact that more information was printed on the back of the CV. Letter from Y. Turchenko to Tekae Zere, 26.7.1974, in: UNESCO 069 (63) AMS.

<sup>254</sup> Letter from P. Bulenzi to Kenneth King, 24.2.1983, UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ixb.

<sup>255</sup> See ch. 4. The northern region of Tigray in particular was home to the strongest militant opposition, the TPLF, which would eventually overthrow the socialist government.

conservation included sensitive activities such as mapping, aerial photography and the zoning of state property in the surroundings of heritage sites.

The government employed a very restrictive approach regarding the release of the final reports on an assistance mission or a concluded project, often causing a considerable delay. Generally, all mission reports remained restricted and classified until their release through the ministry of Education and a consultant's report often underwent a several-months-long process of many requested changes until final approval was given through the government.<sup>256</sup> This raised concern at several points among UNESCO bureaucrats and was an issue specifically relating to Ethiopia. In 1969 a staff member of UNESCO's department for external relations with member states pointed out that in regard to reports, "there have been almost as many requests for modifications etc. from Ethiopia over the past four years as from all other Member States combined."<sup>257</sup>

Controlling official representations and images of Ethiopia was highly relevant to national and international politics for the Ethiopian empire, as well as for the socialist state.<sup>258</sup> The staff of UNESCO and other international organisations placed great weight on respecting the Ethiopian government in this regard. A very critical example of this principle and how much highly international organisations prioritised not offending the Imperial Government and jeopardising their diplomatic relationship is the collaborative cover-up of the famine crisis in 1973-75. The refusal to officially acknowledge the famine, in order to not harm Ethiopia's reputation as a strong country, involved the Ethiopian imperial government and several international organisations, and is held to be the main reason for the disastrous dimensions of the famine crisis itself.<sup>259</sup>

### **Opponents in cooperation: UNESCO bureaucrats and their "us and them" mentality**

This official position to not offend the Ethiopian government at any cost, so as to maintain mutual cooperation, was contrasted with the internal attitude of UNESCO staff towards their Ethiopian counterparts. In practice, the communication delays and difficulties frequently resulted in a situation of internally opposed sides, in which UNESCO, UNDP and the various actors in its service (experts, consultants and resident representatives) conceptualised themselves as opponents of the Ethiopian government, emphasised by a

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<sup>256</sup> Letter from Makaminan Makagiansar, to H.E. Lt. Col. Goshu Wolde, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ix.

<sup>257</sup> Letter from W.J. Ellis to A. Elliott, 17.3.69, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. v.

<sup>258</sup> See ch. 4.

<sup>259</sup> For a more detailed account see Jack Shepherd, *The Politics of Starvation* (New York: Carnegie endowment for Intern. Peace, 1975).

language of “us” and “them”. This was despite the fact that on neither end of the communications could the actors involved be considered homogenous groups. A department director in the antiquities administration, for example, had a different level of involvement and proximity to the central power institutions of the Ethiopian government than the Minister of Education did. UNESCO as an organisation had a varied set of actors operating in their name. Contracted experts and consultants had a different status from secretariat and field office staff. In the case of long-term foreign experts, UNESCO just provided their competence and network in finding and hiring the expert, who would eventually be formally employed by the Ethiopian government, even if the funding did come from bilateral or international donors.

As a strategy to circumnavigate the longwinded hierarchies in the Ethiopian imperial government, the Assistant to the DG of UNESCO, Malcolm Adiseshiah, suggested after a visit to Ethiopia a general push to establish Non-Governmental Organisations in Ethiopia in order to free UNESCO from the obligation to interact directly with the government in order to operate in the country. In the same report, he wrote of evidence that several Ethiopian actors in administrative branches of the government were in favour of this strategy.<sup>260</sup>

Other examples of UNESCO efforts to take charge of the communication and process include field officers seeking to undermine changes made by the government to reports and attempting to skip the step of final approval by bypassing the government in the communication, making sure the information in question would reach the relevant target persons within UNESCO in time to ensure continuous action.<sup>261</sup> There were even instances of producing reports devoid of real information for the Ethiopian government and then communicating the relevant facts through other channels and formats, excused in confidential correspondence between the Addis Ababa mission to UNESCO and headquarters in Paris as due to the alleged disinterest of the government.<sup>262</sup>

This specific underlying tension between UNESCO and the Ethiopian administration can be found in many examples of cooperation. A striking characteristic of many projects implemented in Ethiopia is the fact that they were, in the eyes of UNESCO's staff, initiated by UNESCO staff in the service of educating Ethiopia about the true value and undertaking of its UNESCO membership. This considerably prolonged the chain of communication, since in a first step, the request had to be “stimulated” with the Ethiopian authori-

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<sup>260</sup> Report from Malcolm Adiseshiah to DG, 14.8.58, in: UNESCO 008 (63) MP 03.

<sup>261</sup> Memo from A. Elliott to DG, 27.1.1969, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. v.

<sup>262</sup> Intermediate report from A. Elliott to Director BMS, February 1970, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vi.

ties.<sup>263</sup> These dynamics are best demonstrated by the tone of complaint present in internal UNESCO correspondence that in effect was a method to portray the Ethiopian government as deficient and to argue for the bypassing of official hierarchies who had a supposed lack of competence regarding international assistance and cooperation.<sup>264</sup>

There were also instances from UNESCO's side, where, rather than merely providing assistance, some actors chose to slow down communications in order to remain in control and insist on their own authority. Especially in the early years of Ethiopia's membership, the initial response to a request for assistance submitted by the Ethiopian government was regularly met in UNESCO's relevant department by requirements to correct and improve the wording and subject of the request, and a demand for resubmission. This did not only refer to formal issues, but sometimes also to quite substantial changes to the nature of the request, such as the number and quality of experts demanded, or the duration, localisation and extent of projects. This insistence upon and manifestation of authority over technical expertise has to be understood in terms of a negotiation of control with the government in the area of operations.

From observing two decades of communication between UNESCO and the Ethiopian government during a period of changes, conflicts, growth and loss, setting the scene for everyday working routine, we can draw some general conclusions about the challenges and opportunities that actors in the communication process were facing and how they dealt with it. The protectionist attitude of the Ethiopian government acted to prevent an influx of international assistance projects that would have brought a level of foreign intervention too heavy to cope with. And while UNESCO was much better equipped to handle its new role as an specialised UN operating agency, the staff in the secretariat and the field offices had to create a sense of identity when facing cooperation with governments and other UN agencies, and make a claim for the organisation's relevance in daily practice on the ground.

UNESCO and the Ethiopian government, just as many other governments from so-called developing countries, were unequal players, by default and in quality. Yet, in order to cooperate, both had their ways of producing agency. UNESCO, as an international organisation, gained its agency from being part of a network in control of knowledge, and by in-

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<sup>263</sup> Letter from Erik Olsen to Mr. Bulenzi, 28. May 1977, in UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. v; another example from the 7-year campaign for the conservation of antiquities "[...] although we would very much wish to see such assistance provided for another 5 years. This would require a request from the PMGSE [Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia] to UNDP emphasizing the great importance of the project for your country. Should such a request be made, Unesco would strongly support it and, if required, would provide the necessary assistance for revision of the project document to cover the work foreseen for the next 5 years." In: UNESCO 069 (63) AMS.

<sup>264</sup> Memo from A. Elliott to DG, 27.1.1969, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. v; Letter from Clifford Green to Mr. Terenzio, 18.11.66, in: UNESCO X 067.21 (63) pt. iii.

creasing the speed in which this knowledge could be communicated. The Ethiopian government represented and governed a country that externally was considered weak and developing in many ways, and demonstrated agency sometimes simply by strategic delay, sometimes by threatening to bring projects to a complete standstill, so as to keep operations and interactions at a pace that still seemed possible to control.

## **2.4 Heritage activities as part of Ethiopia-UNESCO cooperation**

Several aspects of the relationship between Ethiopia and UNESCO during the 1950s, 60s and 70s are relevant to the history of the Ethiopian World Heritage. In the early statements issued by UNESCO secretariat members to convince the Ethiopian government of the benefits of a UNESCO membership, activities related to international conservation efforts were already stressed by UNESCO as an issue to the Ethiopian government. The protection of cultural goods in the case of armed conflict and the regulations for international archaeological excavations were specifically pointed out, highlighting the special interest Ethiopia might have in these issues and the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the convention.<sup>265</sup>

### **Ethiopian personalities in UNESCO**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Ethiopian-UNESCO relations were fruitfully extensive. To an extent this was due to certain personalities. One of them was Akalework Habtewold, the Minister of Education from 1967-1969, who had also acted as the first African President of UNESCO's General Assembly from 1960-1962 and issued the first assistance requests regarding wildlife conservation. The other one was Aklilu Habte, an Ethiopian natural scientist who was appointed as a member of the initial Ethiopian National Commission for UNESCO, and was eventually promoted to president of Addis Ababa University, proved to be a very responsive science-related contact in Addis Ababa, according to the general correspondence between UNESCO's regional office and headquarters.<sup>266</sup>

Akalework's affinity to UNESCO's programme and organisational bureaucratic structure alike was complemented by an exceptionally friendly relationship with all UNESCO officers. This relationship stands out in the correspondence as a key element, resulting in a period of efficiently initiated UNESCO projects and missions, as well as the adaptation of

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<sup>265</sup> Letter from Dr. Naidu, 20.5.53, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt i.

<sup>266</sup> Memo from Alan Elliott to Director BMS, 11.4.1968, UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iv; Briefing for the Director-General, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iv.



numerous UNESCO programmes and activities in the early 1970s. Aklilu Habte's reputation within the international organisation was most prominently conveyed when DG Amadou M'Bow invited him to a strategic roundtable about UNESCO's future in 1975.<sup>267</sup> Aklilu Habte also served as the Chairman of the International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa and the first meeting of this committee was hosted by Ethiopia in 1971.<sup>268</sup> The project for a General History of Africa originated in a motion towards "The Rediscovery of Africa"<sup>269</sup> in the wake of decolonisation, necessitating "a factual reappraisal of the African Past" as opposed to the dominating colonial view of Africa as a place with no past, one supposedly lacking historical signifiers of civilisation, in the Western sense, such as political and social developments. The project encompassed eight volumes, each dedicated to a different historical period. Remarkably, this new periodisation defined the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 as a decisive moment in African history, putting it at the beginning of the last volume that was dedicated to the period leading up to the present day of the publishing of the *General History of Africa* in 1993.<sup>270</sup> Ethiopia's commitment to this project was a sign that, despite the relevance of UNESCO as an additional source for technical and financial assistance, there can be no doubt that certain actors were thoroughly invested in the idea of UNESCO on a more conceptual and discursive level. Emancipating African heritage and history and the Pan-African idea in order to manifest identity and power in the new global order were of specific importance, and strategically employed by the Ethiopian government to support the historical narrative of Ethiopia as one of Africa's strongest and oldest countries. Aklilu Habte was assigned Minister of Culture in early 1975<sup>271</sup>. His position and connections would ensure that during his tenure the collaboration between UNESCO and the Ethiopian government would be more fruitful than in the years before and after, and contribute to a prolific period of activities in the cultural sector, in particular in heritage-making.

### **Ethiopia: model country for heritage development projects**

Addis Ababa, situated as the new African diplomatic hub, especially for UN agencies, facilitated a kind of accessibility between Ethiopian government institutions, foreign research experts and UNESCO and UNDP officers, that would prove crucial to the intense cooperation between UNESCO and Ethiopia during the 1960s and 1970s in general. The strategic

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<sup>267</sup> letter from M'Bow to Aklilu Habte, 14.3.75, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vii.

<sup>268</sup> H.E. Mr. Seifu Mahteme Selassie's speech to the 16<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference 1970, no date, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vi.; UNESCO in Ethiopia, 14, 15.

<sup>269</sup> Title of the UNESCO *Courier* issue in October 1959.

<sup>270</sup> Teshale Tibebu, *Making*, xv.

<sup>271</sup> Aklilu Habte, "Changing Relationships in International Co-Operation," *Prospects* 5, no. 1 (March 10, 1975): 12.

relevance of the Ethiopian-UNESCO relationship and the productive work rate between them functioned to set the general tone for over a decade of extensive UNESCO activity in Ethiopia that would start with the organisation's operationalisation phase in 1965, during which the field of heritage-making would reap exceptional benefits from the available assistance projects.

UNESCO's division of cultural heritage was quite interested in building up an international infrastructure for international conservation principles in order to furnish the project of universal heritage with sufficient data. When UNESCO tried to engage countries in conservation, it was commonly inhibited by the simple fact that state agencies in the countries lacked the capacity to deal with conservation.<sup>272</sup> As a study conducted by UNESCO in 1955 had shown, few developing countries had government institutions responsible for conservation and the standards and methods of institutionalisation varied drastically between individual countries.<sup>273</sup>

Most of the developing countries that had signed the World Heritage Convention in 1972 did not meet the required standards of conservation described in it, because of inefficient government structures, the restrictions of a newly forming nation state, the lack of expertise or the lack of executive power. Consequently, the convention also foresaw the provision of technical assistance as an integral approach, to help not only with actual conservation efforts but also with building the necessary infrastructure.

Because of the political climate and the importance of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in the eyes of UNDP and UNESCO representatives, was most suitable as a testing ground for larger scale development cooperation in the area of heritage-making. In particular UNDP pushed for Ethiopia as the main base for the establishment of a regional project, together with the already successful UNDP general country programme, as the government's receptiveness to international cooperation was much better than in other African countries.

In 1975 a "one-of-a-kind development program" was launched in the form of cooperation between the Ethiopian government and UNDP, concerned with the "presentation and preservation of historic sites"<sup>274</sup>. The project served as a model project for UNDP, which deemed the strategy of supporting the institutionalisation and shaping the bureaucratic infrastructure as the most viable element of their overall development mandate. The eager receptiveness of the pre- and post-revolutionary Ethiopian governments was supposed to lead to a successful outcome which would convince other developing countries to

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<sup>272</sup> See the Syrian response in UNESCO 069:72 A 14 pt. ii.

<sup>273</sup> See ch.1 ; response letters to first UNESCO query in 069:72 A 14 pt. ii.

<sup>274</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014 Terminal Report.

agree to similar long-term projects with UNDP, concerning the establishment or reorganisation of government institutions.<sup>275</sup>

For a proposed safeguarding campaign for East African heritage, similar to the Nubian Monuments Campaign, an East African Conservation centre for training local experts was supposed to be set up in the course of the ongoing UNDP conservation project at major Ethiopian heritage sites.<sup>276</sup> Ethiopia was supposed to serve as a model country for preservation of cultural heritage, and foreseen to have a key role as a regional centre of conservation expertise in Africa, much like Indonesia in South East Asia.<sup>277</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Letter from P. Stulz to B. Bernander, 28.3.1978, in 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. vi.

<sup>276</sup> UNDP Country Programme for Ethiopia 1978, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. viii; H.J. Plenderleith and L.J. Rollet-Andriane, "East Africa - Regional Centre for Conservation of Cultural Property, November 1974" (Paris: UNESCO, June 1975).

<sup>277</sup> Letter from H. Daifuku to E. Amerding, 17.6.1974 in UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. i.

### 3. Ethiopian Heritage as International Heritage

Ethiopian national heritage and the related knowledge production that emerged during the 1950s and 60s had formed part of Western interests for a much longer time already. The Ethiopian government supported foreign research interests and integrated these heritage-making capacities into the emerging institutional landscape. Western academic expertise and knowledge production were strategically integrated into the Ethiopian administration since the beginning of the twentieth century, in order to facilitate modernisation and the consolidation of an imperial bureaucratic infrastructure. On the one hand, foreign experts and their knowledge were allowed into Ethiopia to conduct their research or were invited by the government for specific assignments. On the other hand, government employees and experts of Ethiopian nationality were educated in Western institutions and had international experience.

Foreign expertise, and in particular the involvement of UNESCO, substantially contributed to the institutionalisation of heritage-making in Ethiopia. The main heritage-making institutions only came to life as part of international cooperation or projects. Numerous international expert missions concerned with the conservation of natural and cultural heritage visited Ethiopia from the 1960s to the 1980s and in particular a large-scale, seven-year UNDP project significantly consolidated existing resources and further developed the institutional capacities for heritage-making. The existing history of Ethiopian heritage as a product of Western research interests, and the recent intensive involvement of international organisations, made it possible to successfully submit Ethiopian World Heritage nominations when UNESCO announced the call for submissions, despite the barely existent institutional capacities for heritage-making. Thus, international engagement between the years 1963-1978 had helped to transform selected Ethiopian national heritage into World Heritage.

Foreign knowledge production, especially publishing activities, were crucial for the Ethiopian heritage-making process, as it resulted in the Ethiopian heritage sites receiving international attention and being known beyond the circle of interested specialists in the broader Western public. In this regard, experts acted as brokers and producers of knowledge and contributed significantly to the popularity of Ethiopian heritage sites.

### 3.1 Ethiopian heritage institutions and foreign experts

By the time UNESCO started its heritage-related activities in Ethiopia in the early 1960s, the country and its heritage had long been the subject of Western scientific interest.

#### Western romanticism, the “Great Tradition” and the beginning of archaeology in Ethiopia

Intrigued mainly by the existence of an enclave of early Christian tradition on the African continent, Ethiopian studies, which was established as proper academic discipline in the twentieth century, had a mainly theological and linguistic orientation and research focused on the comparative study of early Christian manuscripts.<sup>278</sup> Western Ethiopian studies were characterised by a distinct view, one that tied Ethiopian history to the main trajectories of biblical mythology, the development of scripture and geographical isolation.<sup>279</sup> This view built on a tradition of Ethiopia serving as the “faraway land” of Western historiography since its inception in *The Odyssey* and the writings of Herodotus. The second important notion underpinning Western scholarly interest in Ethiopia was the link back to writings from the classical antiquity, reporting a powerful, wealthy and impressive empire, starting from the Nubian kingdom, then the Aksumite empire to the Abyssinian kingdom of medieval times, and resisting the rise of Islam in the surrounding regions. Of particular importance to the Western interest in Ethiopia was the Christian trajectory of Ethiopian history. The legendary origin of Aksum was centred around the story of the Queen of Saba and King Solomon of Israel and their son, Menelik I, who stole the Ark of the Covenant from Jerusalem and founded Ethiopian Christianity. Furthermore, the “Prester John” myth, a legend describing an idealised version of unspoiled Christian tradition preserved in a remote location, was repeatedly associated with Ethiopia from the fourteenth century on in Western writing.<sup>280</sup>

In connection with the Western historiographical sources, archaeological research interest in Ethiopia was focused on exploring the monumental remains of these ancient and medieval empires. From a Western viewpoint, the increase in archaeological research in

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<sup>278</sup> For an overview see the contributions in Rainer Voigt, ed., *Die äthiopischen Studien im 20. Jahrhundert: Akten der internationalen äthiopischen Tagung Berlin 22. bis 24. Juli 2000 = Ethiopian studies in the 20th century / hrsg. von Rainer Voigt* (Aachen: Shaker, 2003); Maria Rait and V. K. Vigand, “Genesis of the Ethiopian Studies and Its Future Trends,” *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Kyoto, 12-17 December 1997*, 1997, 242–46.

<sup>279</sup> There are also racist implications regarding the idea of a “semitic” Culture. See Tibebe’s overview, Teshale Tibebe, *Making*, xvi, xx.

<sup>280</sup> Levine, *Greater*, 6–8.

Ethiopia equalled a “discovery of the Christian Ethiopia”.<sup>281</sup> Closely connected to this orientalist historical narrative was the proclaimed special status and unique character of Ethiopian historical development, which, in combination with the isolated geographic situation had given birth to Africa’s alleged only advanced civilisation.

These Western research interests, condensed into the so-called orientalist-semiticist paradigm and the Aksumite paradigms, reflected the historical tradition of the “Great Tradition” of the Ethiopian empire, the legitimising narrative of the ruling classes of Ethiopian society at the beginning of the twentieth century. In particular, written sources of Ethiopian history had been produced for centuries in the context of royal courts and religious institutions, laying the foundation for a modern, essentialist tradition of national history. The supposed genesis of the Ethiopian history from the civilising mission of the Sabaeans around 1000 BC would come to dominate the superimposed self-perception as well as the foreign image of the Ethiopian society. Places, events and traditions deemed historically relevant by the Ethiopian elites did not differ too much from those of Western research interests but rather complemented or confirmed Western scholars in their ideas.<sup>282</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, a growing number of archaeological, paleontological, anthropological and scientific expeditions travelled to Ethiopia, often financed and supported by European colonial empires, which were interested in exploring new territories for colonial expansion and gathering information about the isolated and protectionist empire.<sup>283</sup> These expeditions were a starting point for a broader production of Western knowledge about Ethiopia in modern times, since, for the first time, information about Ethiopia was communicated and available to a public audience beyond academic circles. They also marked a starting point for a phase of political and technological modernisation in Ethiopian history, as, for the first time, international technical cooperation projects took place in relation to these expeditions. In order to achieve the imperial permission for expeditions of this kind, intensive diplomatic efforts were necessary. Since the Ethiopian imperial government was first and foremost interested in technical cooperation of any kind, European states sent high-ranking experts to evaluate the possible economic potential and establish a positive relationship with the Ethiopian imperial government.<sup>284</sup> European researchers, missionaries and civil servants worked as consultants for the imperial government and served in diplomatic missions for their countries of origin.

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<sup>281</sup> Jean Leclant, “Decouverte de l’Ethiopie chrétienne,” *Le dossiers de l’archaeologie* 8, no. 2 (1975).

<sup>282</sup> Teshale Tibebu, *Making*, xvii.

<sup>283</sup> Such as the *Deutsche Aksum Expedition*, Asfa Wossen Asserate, “Äthiopien vor 100 Jahren,” in *Im Kaiserlichen Auftrag - Die Deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann, Bd. 2, Altertumskundliche Untersuchungen der DAE in Tigray/Äthiopien*, ed. Steffen Wenig (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2011), 29–34.

<sup>284</sup> For example the Swiss engineer Alfred Ilg, Elisabeth Biasio, *Prunk und Pracht am Hofe Menileks: Alfred Ilg Äthiopien um 1900 = Majesty and magnificence at the court of Menilek* (Zürich Verl. Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2004), 80–87.

When the Italian occupation ended in 1941, the activities of European, American and Japanese researchers in Ethiopia increased steadily and expanded beyond the classic areas of Ethiopian studies. Prehistoric and ethnographic studies of the various ethnic groups as well as paleo-anthropological studies identified promising territories to explore in Ethiopia, establishing new, additional images of Ethiopia as “ethnic museum” and “cradle of humanity”.<sup>285</sup> In addition to the archaeological sites from the classical and medieval periods, natural and prehistoric sites became part of the established national heritage. These new research interests, highlighting the unique features of Ethiopia, integrated well with Ethiopia’s international political representation, in which the emphasis on Ethiopia’s special status played a crucial role.<sup>286</sup> In the first half of the twentieth century, the Western production of knowledge on Ethiopia established itself more firmly in the institutional landscape of European academia, together with a growing community of scholars. At the same time, establishing and canonising the dominant historical narrative with the help of Western knowledge production, especially archaeological research, can be clearly identified as a strategic government decision in the modern history of Ethiopia, comparable to the growing relevance of national memory and history in European national states at the same time.<sup>287</sup> In the new empire under Haile Selassie I, before and after the Italian occupation from 1936-1941, as well as after the 1974 revolution, crafting an official national history was an important political strategy. Foreign experts, as well as Ethiopian nationals with a Western education, served as producers and validating actors for the official history and the national heritage representing this history. All of these efforts produced a specific Western knowledge of Ethiopia, further integrating the country into occidental historiography.

The scientific discourse of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the orientalist-semitic paradigm, a concept that would become increasingly important in the politicisation of history and heritage in Ethiopia, became deeply engrained in the knowledge producing institutions of the Ethiopian national state.<sup>288</sup> The establishment and evolution of heritage-making institutions in particular was driven by foreign research interests as well as by political interests on a national level.

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<sup>285</sup> Levine, *Greater*, 19; Alain Gascon, *La Grande Éthiopie: une utopie africaine: Éthiopie ou Oromie, l'intégration des hautes terres du sud* (Paris: CNRS éd., 1995), 14.

<sup>286</sup> Perham, *Government*, xlix, 1; Delphine Lecoutre, “L’Éthiopie et l’Afrique,” in *L’Éthiopie Contemporaine*, ed. Gérard Prunier (Paris: Karthala, 2007), 160–66.

<sup>287</sup> Triulzi, “Battling,” 276–78; Marzagora, “History,” 9–11.

<sup>288</sup> Teshale Tibebu, *Making*, xvii–xxvii; Rait and Vigand, “Genesis of the Ethiopian Studies and Its Future Trends”; Messay Kebede, *Radicalism and Cultural Dislocation in Ethiopia, 1960-1974* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 68.

## A brief history of Ethiopian heritage institutions

Modern day Ethiopian heritage-making institutions<sup>289</sup> had been established in the context of diplomatic strategies and with the help of foreign expertise from around 1900. Existing religious and cultural traditions of conserving and declaring heritage were contested and claimed as an imperial state affair during the government of Emperor Menelik II, whose politics were motivated by an attempt to consolidate imperial power while creating a modern nation.

The first diplomatic collaboration engaged upon by the Ethiopian imperial government was with the French Archaeological Institute in Cairo. Between 1922 and 1926, the French Capuchin François Bernardin Azais negotiated, on behalf of the French government, an agreement between the two countries that concerned the permission for the first archaeological research in the empire, in exchange for setting up an Ethiopian national museum and the systematic classification and collection of objects in the imperial court.<sup>290</sup>

The National Library and Archives (NALE), founded in 1944, served as a proto-version of a national heritage-making institution and was comprised of archival functions, a museum and an archaeological section. The national archive had originally been created in 1908, together with a ministerial system as an element of the imperial government, and later merged with the government library that had been erected by the Italian government during the occupation of Ethiopia.<sup>291</sup> Designated departments and institutions of heritage conservation were established over the following decades under the Ethiopian imperial government of Menelik II and Haile Selassie I, but foreign experts remained in charge of the activities.<sup>292</sup>

The French-Ethiopian cooperation initiated at the beginning of the twentieth century was advanced further in 1952 with the foundation of the French “Institut éthiopien d’études et de recherches” on the basis of a French-Ethiopian bilateral agreement. The “Institut” was founded as a part of the Ethiopian government, although financed largely by

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<sup>289</sup> The evolution of Ethiopian heritage institutions, despite their continuous existence from the 1960s onwards, was for many years characterised by their transformation and reassignment throughout different political periods. Although it is possible to find a linear history in the evolution of these institutions, from today’s viewpoint this history is difficult to reconstruct and somewhat fragmented, indicating a very palpable reason for the failed efficacy of state regulated conservation efforts. The history of these institutions has to be approached carefully, as each government routinely denounced any legacy to previous governments. In press releases and other official communication, institutions were introduced as originally conceived and referred to as “being founded” in recent times by the current government.

<sup>290</sup> These negotiations took place under the reign of Ras Tafari, later to become Emperor Haile Selassie I. Ras Tafari had a close-knit relationships with the French Capuchins, who had served as personal teachers for him, Amélie Chekroun, “Un archéologue capucin en Éthiopie (1922-1936): François Bernardin Azais,” *Afriques [En ligne]*, 2011, 5, 6, <http://afriques.revues.org/785>.

<sup>291</sup> Solomon Gebreyes Beyene, *History*, 18–21.

<sup>292</sup> Such as the National Library and Archives in 1944 or the Antiquities Administration in 1966, Ibid.; Kebede Geleta Terefe, “Evolution,” 30–36.



the French government and hosted by the National Archives, in lieu of an existing government body in charge of antiquities or heritage. The “Institut” was officially entrusted to establish a collaboration of French and Ethiopian archaeologists, paleo-anthropologists, art historians and historians. However, the overwhelming majority of researchers remained French for many years. The “Institut’s” activities covered all areas of research as well as the collection and exhibition of monuments and artefacts.<sup>293</sup> In 1977, the “Institut” was integrated with the Ministry of Culture upon its foundation.<sup>294</sup> In 1979 the CRCCH was installed as a separate department of the Ministry of Culture to elaborate and fully nationalise responsibilities for heritage-making and administration. It had an organisational structure containing independent departments for inventory and monitoring, research, conservation and permissions, all of which would have been previously handled within just one office.<sup>295</sup>

In parallel to the creation of institutions in charge of cultural heritage, legislation was introduced in 1966 and complemented by two executive orders in 1966 and 1974, to provide a legal definition of antiquities and a legal ground to executively safeguard antiquities and prevent illicit trade. In reality, however, all these measures were inadequate to meet the needs identified, and the goals promised, for official cultural heritage responsibilities. These institutions had a dire lack of skills and manpower as well as the necessary bureaucratic efficiency to achieve the desired impact. Similarly, the legislation remained ineffective as it suffered from a lack of executive means and further detailed regulations and definitions.<sup>296</sup>

Initially an expansion of the “Institut”, the CRCCH was systematically built up when the technical assistance programme of UNESCO provided opportunities to request funds and expertise. Through the Cultural Heritage division of UNESCO, several consultants were hired, and not only produced draft legislation but also pursued the expansion and organisational development of the CRCCH. While the director and the administrative staff of the CRCCH would always be Ethiopian, both the expertise and the key actors involved in knowledge production were largely of Western provenance. Obtaining external financial aid was a key working principle of the CRCCH and other Ethiopian government institu-

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<sup>293</sup> Kebbede Mikael and Jean Leclant, “La Section d’Archaeologie (1952-1955),” *Annales d’Ethiopie* 1 (1955): 1-10.

<sup>294</sup> Aleme Eshete, *The Cultural Situation in Socialist Ethiopia*, Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies (Paris: Unesco, 1982), 38, 39.

<sup>295</sup> Kebede Geleta Terefe, “Evolution,” 59, 60; since 2000 the name of the institution is Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH).

<sup>296</sup> Eugeniusz Gasiorowski, “Legislation for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Ethiopia” (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), 2.

tions, as no national substantial funding for foreign expertise was available. Essentially, UNESCO was also in a much better position to recruit and find experts internationally.<sup>297</sup>

While the first regulations concerning the protection of wildlife and hunting regulations, especially for big game, are documented in 1909, wildlife reserves were delineated for the first time during the Italian occupation in 1930, and more elaborate game regulations were defined subsequently. These regulations would eventually include a selection of endangered species that were excluded from game hunting.<sup>298</sup>

The evolution of environmental, wildlife and natural heritage protection in Ethiopia concerned several branches of government and stretched over several institutions. From the 1960s onwards, several government institutions were created, including the Ministry of Agriculture, a Game Department and the Forestry Authority. The most important institution in terms of natural heritage was the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation (EWCO), which was established in 1964<sup>299</sup>.

Establishing the first national parks and protected natural zones initially amounted to little more than a formality, as the means to execute upon the plans was still absent in the government. As was the case with the cultural heritage institutions, an ongoing shortage of resources, especially in terms of manpower to staff field posts such as guards, rangers and district managers, equipment and infrastructure (cars, guns, roads, radio communication), forced the area of natural conservation to linger somewhat as merely a theoretical exercise. Trained personnel, skilled management staff, financial and technical equipment, were insufficient or non-existing.

In the area of natural conservation, the role of foreign expertise, contributing to build up the relevant structure, data and conditions for heritage is documented from an early stage. For example, Dr. Friedrich von Breitenbach, a German forestry expert with working experience in Finland, Russia and Uzbekistan and later as forest advisor for the UNECA, was the Director of Forestry in Ethiopia from 1958-1963.<sup>300</sup> He published the *Ethiopian Forestry Review*, which is one of the earliest publications concerned with natural conservation efforts.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014, Terminal Report; a lot of the correspondence between the respective departments at UNESCO, the UNDP Resident Representative in Addis Ababa and the Chief Technical Advisor of the ETH/74/014 Project regarded the specifics and possibilities of the requests that Ethiopia could fruitfully file, in: UNESCO 069:72 (36) A 136.

<sup>298</sup> Jesse Hillman, "Ethiopia: Compendium of Wildlife Conservation Information, Vol. 2" (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation, 1993), 11-13; John Blower, "Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks" (Paris: UNESCO, March 1971), 3.

<sup>299</sup> Blower, "Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks," 8; today the institution is called Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA).

<sup>300</sup> H. F. Glen and W. G. Welman, "Obituary," *Bothalia: African Biodiversity & Conservation* 25, no. 2 (1995): 260-264.

<sup>301</sup> Ethiopian Forestry Association, "Ethiopian Forestry Review," *Ethiopian Forestry Review*, 1961.

As with the CRCCH, the EWCO was established formally as a part of the ministry of agriculture, but was under the direction of a foreign expert. From 1965-71, John Blower, former British Colonial Senior Park Warden and wildlife adviser from Kenya, served as a Wild Life Conservation Adviser and Senior Game Warden for the newly founded Wild Life Conservation Authority.<sup>302</sup> John Blower promoted a concept of wildlife protection that demonstrated a traditional colonial understanding, focusing on the establishment of national parks and game reserves in order to separate them from interference from their indigenous inhabitants.<sup>303</sup>

Foreign experts were not only vital for running the EWCO, but also as head managers or wardens of national parks. A primary responsibility for the experts in these positions was monitoring and mapping wildlife, as well as the systematic documentation according to the standards and guidelines of the international organisations, such as IUCN and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).<sup>304</sup> Often, the international experts worked in various heritage-making contexts during the time of their contract. Leslie Brown of the New York Zoological Society, advisor to several African countries for IUCN and UNESCO in the 1960s and 1970s, served as an advisor for EWCO in 1964 and 1965, taught at the university in Addis Ababa, installed the Natural History Museum in Addis Ababa, and published several books, among them teaching material for future university courses.<sup>305</sup>

The history of the Ethiopian natural and cultural heritage institutions illustrates the role of international organisations as well as the need for a strategic integration of foreign expertise and knowledge production into the nascent institutional landscape. In the context of strategic state transformation under Haile Selassie I towards a bureaucratic, constitutional monarchy, new institutions needed to be established in Ethiopia for many areas of government responsibility.<sup>306</sup>

The establishment of heritage-making in Ethiopia was part of this larger strategy to institutionalise Western knowledge production as a state domain in the educational, scientific and cultural sectors. The national skills shortage was, however, particularly negative for the heritage-making institutions. All recruitment for government institutions had to draw from a very small pool of trained nationals, all of whom had to be deemed sufficiently loyal to the government. This meant that filling positions in the heritage institutions was

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<sup>302</sup> Interview with Hans Hurni, 12.5.2015, Berne (CH); Hillman, "Ethiopia: Compendium of Wildlife Conservation Information, Vol. 2," 13; Blower, "Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks," 7-9.

<sup>303</sup> Guillaume Blanc, "Violence et incohérence en milieu naturel: une histoire de parc éthiopien du Semen," *Etudes rurales* 197, no. 1 (2016): 149-52; see also ch. 4.4.

<sup>304</sup> Hillman, "Ethiopia: Compendium of Wildlife Conservation Information, Vol. 2," 11-14.

<sup>305</sup> Guindeuil, "Nature," 141; L.H. Brown, *Conservation for Survival - Ethiopia's Choice* (Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie I University, 1973).

<sup>306</sup> Bahru Zewde, *History*, 201-9.

particularly difficult as it had a generally low priority. Training national heritage experts was virtually impossible— only from the 1970s on were classes in archaeology begun at the Haile Selassie I University. The nearest opportunity to train wildlife rangers was at the Mweka College in Tanzania, but the number of Ethiopians trained here was not nearly sufficient to provide for the vast territories established as protected natural zones.<sup>307</sup>

In short, from the beginning on, all of the Ethiopian heritage institutions were dependent on international funds to operate properly as well as to further develop. From the 1950s, however, the key institutions for heritage-making under the government's authority were established and accelerated through UNESCO's involvement.

### **3.2 UNESCO missions for Ethiopian heritage**

From the beginning, UNESCO's extensive activity in Ethiopia included the field of heritage-making. UNESCO's engagement in the years between 1960 and 1980 was by no means limited to conservation projects in specific heritage sites, but covered the whole range of heritage-making, including the establishment of the National Archives, Library and the National Museum, the production of several exhibitions, and further related activities. The increase in international activity and available funds turned to the advantage of those embryonic Ethiopian institutions concerned with natural and cultural heritage conservation and effectively delivered a substantial contribution towards the establishment of Ethiopian national heritage. UNESCO's activities stimulated the existing efforts of the Ethiopian imperial government to be on par with the growing foreign research interests that were beginning to put pressure on the government regarding the question of Ethiopian national heritage.

The considerable development of heritage institutions taking place in Ethiopia during the 1960s and 1970s involved international organisations from the beginning. Ethiopia was not devoid of consideration from the community of international heritage experts before the 1960s, but the following two decades were comprised of a highly active, dense series of international engagements that would form a vital contribution to the Ethiopian national heritage-making process.

The activities of international heritage experts did not only concern concrete restoration projects, but went far beyond. Heritage-related activities included the full range of

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<sup>307</sup> Training in Mweka was only for assistant and ranger level, not manager level; fellowship applications and training programme in: UNESCO 069:7(100) A 218; Hillman, "Ethiopia: Compendium of Wildlife Conservation Information, Vol. 2," 8.

UNESCO's possible means of assistance, such as the award of fellowships and provision of technical equipment. They gave detailed recommendations to the creation of a full-bodied institutional infrastructure to enable state-led conservation, including draft legislation for the protection of antiquities and the demarcation of protected natural zones. These reports also fostered a compilation of selected sites into a circuit that eventually resembled the first cluster of heritage sites included in the World Heritage List. These sites not only complied with the UNESCO-sent Western expert's notion of what was considered "outstanding" but also demonstrated what was considered to be Ethiopia's most valuable history at the time from the government's viewpoint, namely the ancient monuments of northern Ethiopia.

### **First steps in international heritage-making and the invention of the "Historic Route", 1962-1975**

The inception of Ethiopian heritage as an international affair, and an area involving UNESCO, occurred in the realm of natural heritage. Natural conservation in Ethiopia was remarkably international from an early point on. In 1962, an FAO/IUCN special project was conducted with the intention of assisting interested countries in establishing wildlife conservation strategies. The framework of this "African Special Project" went back to a IUCN decision in 1960, after which two designated experts started to travel and promote a number of Eastern African countries. The FAO/IUCN African Special Project encompassed two approaches to natural protection— conservation as well as resource mobilisation. After the experts had made their initial tour, where the idea was introduced to the new African national governments, the Ethiopian government proved particularly receptive to the concept.<sup>308</sup>

As a result, in 1963 Akalework Habtewold, the Minister for Agriculture, submitted a request to UNESCO. This was to provide assistance for the development of national parks and the protection of wildlife in Ethiopia and the onset of an intense phase of heritage-making in Ethiopia through UNESCO missions. In his address to the DG and the General Assembly of UNESCO, Akalework Habtewold stated:

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<sup>308</sup> T. Riney and P. Hill, "FAO/IUCN African Special Project - Interim Report on Ethiopia" (Rome: FAO, 1963), 1, 2.

It is our wish to manage and develop national parks and wildlife reserves in such a way as to secure the preservation of their flora and fauna, provide centres of biological and ecological research, and contribute to the growth of the national economy, especially through the development of tourism and game cropping.<sup>309</sup>

The request was met positively:

Fully conscious of the scientific, cultural, educational social and economic importance of the natural habits, of the wildlife, constituted by a large variety of species, some of which are endemic, of the remarkable landscapes and archaeological sites of Ethiopia which represent an inheritance of universal interest the DG decided to support the request.<sup>310</sup>

In 1963, a further UNESCO mission was dispatched to Ethiopia, composed of senior experts from European and American institutions of wildlife conservation. It was headed by Sir Julian Huxley, a former DG of UNESCO and a biologist with research experience in African wildlife. The other members of the mission were L. Swift, former Director of the Division of Wildlife Management, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. Barton Worthington, Deputy-DG of the United States-based charity organisation Nature Conservancy, and Professor Theodore Monod of the Musée national d'Histoire naturelle in Paris. Julian Huxley had been on a mission concerned with "The Conservation of Wild Life and Natural Habitats in Central and East Africa" in 1961, leading him to include second hand information about the relevance of Ethiopian wildlife and scenery, prompting a recommendation to consign a mission to further investigate on the matter.<sup>311</sup>

The mission's main concern was, *per* the definition of the request, wildlife, but interestingly, and corresponding with the DG's feedback, the final report contained remarks on cultural monuments as well.<sup>312</sup> This indicates that all actors involved understood national heritage as a portfolio of sites, and in a way that it would inherently encompass both natural and cultural sites. During the short period of two weeks, the experts produced little more than very general recommendations, emphasising the lack of conventional, functional government institutions required to practice conservation in the first place. The report also contained, however, a suggested selection of sites, namely the "Managasha Na-

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<sup>309</sup> Julian Huxley et al., "The Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Ethiopia" (Paris: UNESCO, December 27, 1963), 6.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Julian Huxley, "The Conservation of Wild Life and Natural Habitats in Central and East Africa," Report on a mission accomplished for Unesco, July-September 1960 (UNESCO, 1961), x.

<sup>312</sup> Blower, "Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks," 6; Huxley et al., "The Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Ethiopia," 9, 11, 12, 15, 16.

tional Park”, “Matahara Proposed National Park in Awash”, “Abijata Lake Proposed National Park”, a “Proposed National Park in the Rift Valley”, and “A Scenic National Park at the Source of the Nile.”<sup>313</sup> Another mission from UNESCO embarked to Ethiopia, during 1964/1965, carried out by Leslie Brown, former Director of Agriculture in Kenya and Major Ian Grimwood, former Chief Game Warden of Kenya, in order to “provide assistance to the Ethiopian Government in the field of conservation of nature and natural resources, their restoration and enrichment.” The consultants themselves described their missions as leading to positive results, specifically the establishment of the EWCO. Remarkably, as with Huxley et al., Grimwood and Brown referred in their reports to the proposal for the establishment of a conservation board in charge not only of wildlife but also “archaeological resources”.<sup>314</sup> The proposal went as far as to claim that only tourism would provide the justification needed for the board to successfully carry out conservation:

The present wildlife potential of Ethiopia is insufficient to support a large tourist industry on its own, in face of competition from nearby East African countries where game is more plentiful and more easily seen. The richness of Ethiopia’s fauna lies more in its uniqueness than in the spectacular number of variety of animals to be seen, which tends to make it of less interest to the general public. The country has, however, historical sites and antiquities such as are to be found nowhere else in Africa south of the Sahara. It also has some of the grandest scenery in the world. Only by the inclusion of such attractions into the first major tourist circuits does it seem likely that a large enough flow of visitors can be created to provide the Board with the means to carry out its present primary task of saving some of the country’s rarer animals.<sup>315</sup>

In comparison with natural heritage, cultural heritage received much larger attention in terms of international assistance, since the sites were more not only more numerous but also more sensational in terms of scientific value. Lalibela was the first site of extensive international cooperation and official engagement with the Ethiopian government to restore the monuments and provide for their conservation. Initially, Ethiopia requested to launch an international safeguarding campaign modelled after the Nubian Monuments Campaign. Even though UNESCO did not want to commit to a full-sized safeguarding campaign immediately,

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<sup>313</sup> Huxley et al., “The Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Ethiopia,” 32.

<sup>314</sup> Blower, “Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks,” 6; I.R. Grimwood, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources” (Paris: UNESCO, August 1965); L.H. Brown, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources” (Paris: UNESCO, August 1965).

<sup>315</sup> Brown, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources,” 2.

“they wanted to prove that His Imperial Highness’ appeal to them was met with favour, they approved the idea of sending immediately to Ethiopia, at their own expenses, an expert to make financial estimations and technical suggestions about the restoration, provided that the Ethiopian party took charge of the local expenses (hotel and transport) of the said expert.”<sup>316</sup>

This resulted at the beginning of 1965 in a joint suggestion by UNESCO and the American Society of Archaeology to the International Fund for Monuments, a newly founded American organisation (whose Chairman was Colonel James A. Gray), which “immediately agreed to make the Lalibela Project the first one to be launched by the new organization.”<sup>317</sup> These efforts were later considered by UNESCO and UNDP staff as a kind of preparation for further successful international projects in Ethiopia<sup>318</sup>. Through the personal engagement of Princess Ruth Desta, the restoration of the churches started in 1965 as a collaborative effort between ICCROM and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and would go on for several years. Ruth Desta, a granddaughter of Haile Selassie I, was sent to Lalibela to in 1964 to supervise and accelerate the building of the Seven Olives Hotel, the first high class hotel in the region, which was supposed to be completed in time for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II in February 1965. Swedish and American Missionaries were in charge of the hotel project and acted as the first managers for the hotel. The princess subsequently acted as the administrator of the imperial account for the project.<sup>319</sup>

Soon after the works in Lalibela began, UNESCO’s first mission concerned with the institutional advancement of Ethiopian heritage-making dispatched R. H. Howland, Professor for Archaeology and Art History, Secretary-Treasurer of the U.S. National Committee of ICOMOS and chairman of the Department of Civil History at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., in 1967 to bring forth “practical recommendations and suggestions [...] for those who have the heavy responsibility for developing an Antiquities Administration for Ethiopia.”<sup>320</sup> This endeavour resulted in a report entailing *Recommendations for the Organization of the Ethiopian Antiquities Administration*. The technical director of the

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<sup>316</sup> S. Pierre Pétrides, Memorandum on the Project for Restoration and Conservation of the Monuments of Lalibela, in NALE, 1.2.26.5, Lalibela Committee.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> Such as the ETH 74/14 project: “Lalibela was also the place where the project could record massive progress of work - succeeded in close cooperation with the local administration and the church itself.” Draft report of the Tripartite Meeting from 27.1.1978, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. vi.

<sup>319</sup> Cheques and spreadsheets in NALE, 1.2.26.5, Lalibela Committee; International Fund for Monuments, *Lalibela-Phase I Adventure in Restoration* (New York: International Fund for Monuments, 1967); Ivy Pearce, *An Ethiopian Harvest: A Coll. of Experiences Garnered* (Worthing: Curchman Publ., 1988), 116-18.

<sup>320</sup> R.H. Howland, “Ethiopia - Recommendations for the Organization of the Ethiopian Antiquities Administration” (Paris: UNESCO, June 1967), 1; Richard H. Howland, “Journey to Ethiopia’s Past,” *UNESCO Courier* 20, no. 11 (1967): 39-42.



Lalibela project, architect Sandro Angelini of ICCROM, oversaw and planned the restoration work, but returned for follow-up missions with a more general scope.

Ian Grimwood and Leslie Brown had already stated in their report that only tourism would provide the justification to install conservation institutions that could successfully carry out “the primary task of conservation, believing that conservation alone would not provide enough priority and incentive in the eyes of the Ethiopian government.”<sup>321</sup> Indeed, the issue of cultural and natural heritage attracted attention as an item of development planning due to its potential for creating tourist destinations and establishing tourism as an economic sector in Ethiopia. In 1968 the Ministry for Planning and Development submitted a request to UNESCO to send an expert for legal and organisational aspects of cultural heritage, so as to build a systematic foundation for the development of sites of cultural heritage as tourist destinations.<sup>322</sup>

The Cultural Heritage division of UNESCO had its eye on Ethiopia, as did the UNDP regional representative in Addis Ababa, with the objective in mind to execute a larger-scale project, combining development planning, tourism and conservation of monuments, and presented this possibility to the Ministry of Planning in 1968.<sup>323</sup> In pointing to the possibility for a larger amount of funding to be made available as a follow-up to the initial project, UNESCO managed to secure the interest of the Ministry of Planning, which added considerable weight to the cause of conservation. Together with the economist Louis Mougín, in 1968 Sandro Angelini offered a report titled *Proposals for the development of sites and monuments in Ethiopia as a contribution to the growth of cultural tourism*<sup>324</sup>. Two years later in 1970, the consultant B.G. Gaidoni conducted a study on *Cultural Tourism: Prospects for its Development*.<sup>325</sup> All of these missions contained, in parts, recommendations to the institutional organisation of the heritage-making institutions as well as the legislation regarding heritage.

Tourism presented a recurring component of all conservation activities in Ethiopia. For many it carried a promise of salvation for developing countries, and several targeted activities guided by that belief were initiated within UNESCO and other institutions like UNECA and FAO during that time. These included surveying the touristic potential of countries based on economic prospects or infrastructural investment schemes aimed to improve the standard of tourist destinations and make them more accessible. In this zeit-

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<sup>321</sup> Grimwood, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources,” 2.

<sup>322</sup> Letter from Belai Abbai to Malcolm Adiseshiah, 4.1.1968, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) AMS, pt. ii.

<sup>323</sup> Response to letter from Malcolm Adiseshiah to Belai Abbai, 14.2.1968, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) AMS, pt. ii.

<sup>324</sup> Sandro Angelini and Louis Mougín, “Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism” (Paris: UNESCO, November 1968).

<sup>325</sup> B.G. Gaidoni, “Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development” (Paris: UNESCO, August 1970).

geist, another of Sandro Angelini's missions in 1971 finally brought a concrete working plan for the development of individual sites alongside the "Historic Route" to the table.<sup>326</sup>

### **Making heritage development happen: the seven-year UNDP project for the presentation and preservation of selected sites, 1975-1982**

After more than ten years of consultation and conservation efforts through UNESCO's experts, the conditions for heritage-making had matured enough by 1974 to take the next step towards shaping the Ethiopian national heritage in accordance with the universal standards of heritage. Yet despite several preparatory missions, Ethiopian heritage was still not in a position to launch the safeguarding campaign that had been requested and envisaged for it. As another preparatory step, a seven-year project for the *Presentation and preservation of selected sites*, was launched in 1975, funded and organised by UNDP and administered by UNESCO.<sup>327</sup> This project was deemed necessary to build up in the first instance the national capacities for receiving and putting to use international donations for safeguarding that would be made available once the campaign would be launched.<sup>328</sup>

The project, listed as UNDP project ETH 74/014, was the crucial contribution towards the institutionalisation of cultural and natural heritage in Ethiopia. It employed two experts as architect restorers for a period of five and three years, and work was carried out at selected monuments in Gondar, Lalibela, Lake Tana, Axum, Harar and Yeha.

The immediate objective of the project was not so much the actual conservation of monuments, but rather to enhance the capabilities of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in the administration of antiquities. The associated report illuminates how embryonic the existing bureaucratic and institutional structure in Ethiopia still were up until the beginning of the project, and how much UNESCO was involved in building up the modern government structures from the ground. The early activities were largely concerned with the establishment and operation of the newly founded CRCCH as a capable organisation:

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<sup>326</sup> Sandro Angelini, "Ethiopia - The Historic Route, A Work-Plan for the Development of the Sites and Monuments" (Paris: UNESCO, August 1971).

<sup>327</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014, Terminal Report, 1.

<sup>328</sup> The campaign was acknowledged by UNESCO's General Conference in 1976 (resolution 19 C/4.126), but not implemented until 1988; International campaign to safeguard the principal monuments and sites of Ethiopia—campaign strategy and action plan 1988-1997, May 1988, in: ARCCH, 14-1, UNESCO, Folder 1.

Principles and outlines of organisation, administration, planning and implementation of work, budget preparation and accounting systems were prepared and presented to the government, together with suggestions for general patterns of duty in job description for staff. Particular attention was given the preparation of reporting systems, and the classification and filing of the project correspondence.<sup>329</sup>

A secondary objective of the project was to promote an infrastructure within which the various activities of surveying sites and monuments could be organised, and furthermore to continue and develop the programmes for the conservation and development of sites and monuments along the “Historic Route” for touristic purposes. The activities included a training component, including fellowships for some Ethiopians, and onsite courses in architectural conservation, a research component investigating and dealing with the revival of local lime mortar production and, for the largest part, “restoration of monuments and expanding the Ministry of Culture’s capability to administer and preserve the national heritage”.<sup>330</sup>

In many cases restoration work had to be conducted from scratch, starting with an inventory, a topographic survey, microbiological studies, mapping and a photogrammetric survey of the site. The project also included vast administrative activities such as building up a national inventory of antiquities, drafting a more effective legislation and establishing a more effective and frequent communication pattern with relevant international organisations. The Polish legal expert E. Gasiorowski, commissioned as a consultant within the framework of ETH/74/014, presented fully worded draft legislation and a comprehensive to-do list of recommendations. This list was almost all-encompassing in terms of the necessities of heritage-making. He stated the need to re-write existing legislation so as to achieve a more effective legal basis and to clarify questions of ownership of antiquities. He made it clear that, in his eyes, heritage-making in Ethiopia could not be sufficiently practised in the future without more research, in order to prepare a classified register of historical objects, monuments and art objects; without up-to-date export regulations and enlarged powers for the national Museum with regard to the export of antiquities, so as to ensure antiquities stayed in the country; and without the training of more local specialists in the different fields of preservation and presentation of heritage.<sup>331</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014, Terminal Report, 4.

<sup>330</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014, Terminal Report, 2, 3.

<sup>331</sup> Letter from Makaminan Makagiansar to H.E. Lt. Col. Goshu Wolde, 15.9.1981, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) A 136.

Along with the heritage sites, the Ethiopian National Museum was also built up over the course of several years, largely with the help of foreign experts provided through the UNESCO technical assistance programme. More or less every practical step required in establishing the national museum was implemented and executed within the framework of an expert mission from UNESCO. Following the report of the mission of N. Cole-King to set up a catalogue of museum pieces at the IES in 1974, further expert advisers were requested and appointed and, in effect, this resulted in a piecemeal type build up of the museum over several years through many small missions and initiatives.<sup>332</sup> Building up conservation laboratories, including equipment and a specialised library, formed a continuous part of the museum project.

Despite the political and societal turbulence caused by the change of regimes in 1974, the promotion of national heritage, especially cultural heritage, fit very well within the political paradigms of both the old empire as well as the new government in place after the revolution. Heritage-making and related international projects were affected by the uncertain situation after 1974, but most representatives of international organisations had stayed in the country throughout the revolution.<sup>333</sup> Overall, the institutional activities in conservation were not disturbed by the relevant authorities, but actually received continuous support:

The Secretariat considered at various times the possibility of freezing the project, waiting for more favourable conditions, but in the light of reactions from local authorities, it was thought preferable to maintain the execution of the project even at a reduced pace.<sup>334</sup>

The change of government included, however, a political re-orientation of cultural politics according to socialist principles, aimed at shifting the emphasis of the project away from the presentation of sites for tourism towards the “preservation of the cultural heritage of the Ethiopian people.” To ensure this the government insisted on having tighter control over foreign research and conservation activities related to heritage, demanding more elaborate reports on all restoration work, including “an initial photographic record

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<sup>332</sup> B.B. Lal, “Restoration of Works of Art at the Ethiopian National Museum” (Paris: UNESCO, 1977).

<sup>333</sup> Letter from John C. Philips to Miss Mc Kitterick, 27.6.1975, in UNESCO X 07.21 (63), pt. viii.

<sup>334</sup> Memo to Deputy DG from Makaminan Makagiansar, 8.4.1981, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. ix.

before any work commenced and also a final photographic report when the work was completed"<sup>335</sup>, a practice which had not been followed up until then.

Apart from high security risk areas where work could not be undertaken, the grounds for delays of the conservation-projects with UNESCO's involvement were similar to the problems which had occurred before 1974, such as the delayed release of Government contributions, critical shortage of trained local personnel and difficulties in identification of candidates for fellowships.<sup>336</sup>

### **Marginalisation of local knowledge production in the development process**

The relevance of Western expert knowledge and the institutionalisation of knowledge production in general, and heritage-making in particular, inevitably led to a marginalisation of local knowledge production. From the beginning, the activities of international heritage experts only very selectively included local knowledge into the heritage-making process. The Ethiopian Orthodox church acted as the guardian of all church-related, religious heritage sites, yet this was only occasionally mentioned in the correspondences or reports, and not once was a concrete contact or counterpart in the church organisation referred to or named.

UNESCO's official policy intended, through its assistance projects, "to build a broad platform of self-reliance and skilled manpower to meet the responsibility of the international campaign."<sup>337</sup> The intention and attempt to put conservation and related knowledge into the hands of Ethiopians was articulated in all working plans. Officially, building capacity by training counterparts was both a requirement and a desired outcome for a technical assistance mission, but in practice this was often far from reality. Although the facilitation of local knowledge production was part of UNESCO projects, such as the training of staff in conservation techniques or the establishment of long-term training programmes, the lack of institutional resources and the general conditions usually did not allow for a successful outcome of such training attempts. Additionally, there was the difficulty in finding suitably trained people to start the specialised training in the first place.<sup>338</sup> Regularly, the lack of skilled manpower and expertise, and the insufficient standard of academic and vocational training of Ethiopian experts, was used as an argument to raise funds for projects and for fellowships of Ethiopians to study in Europe. It was an explicit project goal of ETH 74/14 to "enhance the capabilities of the ministry in the administration and survey-

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<sup>335</sup> Letter from John C. Phillips to M. Jimenez, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) pt. i.

<sup>336</sup> Memo to Deputy DG from Makaminan Makagiansar, 8.4.1981, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ixb.

<sup>337</sup> Letter from Zewde Gurnu to Dr. K. King, 4.3.81, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. vii.

<sup>338</sup> Letter from D. Najman to Mr. J.M. Saunders, 27.11.1975, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) A 136.

ing of sites and monuments by practical in service training followed by international fellowships"<sup>339</sup>. The training of expertise was decided for on an individual basis, meaning a selection of individual people were to be sent abroad to specific study programmes. Prior to the fellowship the subsequent position of these individuals was already set, e.g. a painting restorer in Lalibela would restore a specific painting for two years; or another might become director of the IES; or another the head of CRCCH. In addition to these restrictions regarding the pre-selection of candidates, applicants for the fellowships had to provide medical examination records, pass language tests, and possess a sufficiently good academic degree.<sup>340</sup>

Sometimes the Ethiopian authorities were even less convinced of their capacities than the international experts themselves. In order to conduct a photogrammetric survey of heritage sites, the CRCCH requested an expert mission during the project ETH 74/014. The chief architect of the project Erik Olsen, together with the archaeologist Francis Anfray, and the photogrammetry expert Maurice Gory, assessed the situation, and came to the conclusion that there actually were sufficient Ethiopian resources. The CRCCH had several qualified employees, who, in their eyes, required only a further specialised training in order to be suitable to the task, a solution they deemed both cheaper and more sustainable. Yet they had to work to convince the Ethiopian authorities of this fact, a process that took up several months' time. Eventually an inter-agency cooperation was launched and both the CRCCH and the Ethiopian Mapping Agency each sent a photographer on the fellowship to Europe.<sup>341</sup>

Institutionalising Western knowledge production often resulted in creating standards and systems that were impossible to feed and grow from national capacities alone, and the localisation of expertise rarely proved feasible since the standard against which the work was measured remained the Western standard of ICOMOS and IUCN, which had developed in accordance with Western research and science. International involvement and training had in effect reinforced foreign control over knowledge production. An element of most expert missions was the evaluation of the national experts' work, so as to ensure they were working according to European standards. The ICCROM experts regularly evaluated the performance of Ethiopian staff as part of their restoration missions, yet it is apparent that foreign experts were rarely evaluated. Only on the basis of complaints were individual sections of their work re-examined.<sup>342</sup> Despite an occasional positive evaluation, such as ICCROM Director Harold Plenderleith's assessment of Mammo Mugale as

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<sup>339</sup> UNDP/ETH/74/014, Terminal Report, 2.

<sup>340</sup> See the fellowship applications in UNESCO 069:72 (63) AMS and UNESCO 069:72 A 136.

<sup>341</sup> Correspondence and notes regarding the photogrammetry fellowships, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ixb.

<sup>342</sup> Confidential letter from Erik Olsen to Tesfaye Shewaye, 21.2.1980, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ix.

“well qualified to supervise or indeed to execute”<sup>343</sup> necessary first aid restoration in Lalibela, the Western experts participating in the conservation projects in Ethiopia regularly stated that conservation would only be possible by continuing the practice of recruiting qualified and experienced technicians and restorers from abroad.<sup>344</sup>

An additional factor inhibiting the evolution of a more resilient body of local expertise and knowledge production presented itself in the general skilled man-power deficiency in Ethiopia. Even if people had received special training in an area of conservation as part of an international assistance project, they were not necessarily further employed in a specialised position where they could use the particular expertise gained. Instead they were posted to other bureaucratic assignments. For example, of the people receiving specialised training within the project ETH/74/014, “only one of the architects [...] trained [...] has been engaged by the Ministry of Culture [...]. The person studying as a building restorer completed his thesis work and was supposed to go to Denmark, but was assigned to administrative duties in the Project Section of the Ministry of Culture [...]”. This amounted, in the eyes of UNESCO consultants evaluating the situation in Ethiopia, to trained national experts being wasted in other government positions<sup>345</sup>.

Looking at the history of heritage-making institutions in Ethiopia and the role of international heritage-experts and UNESCO in the process, in particular those years between 1972 and 1978—which were simultaneously the preparatory years between the ratification of the World Heritage Convention and the compilation of the first World Heritage List—makes it possible to see these years as “boom years” for heritage-making in Ethiopia. On a practical level, some of the efforts and initiatives that had started in the 1960s towards institutionalising heritage-making as a government responsibility had by then begun to manifest themselves. The involvement of UNESCO marked a turning point in Ethiopian heritage-making as the incipient existing national efforts and expertise could successfully be channelled both into projects that benefited enormously from the increased international attention and the new funding possibilities opened up via UNESCO. Funds, expertise and technical equipment for heritage production could have never been provided to that extent by the Ethiopian government. The requirement for extensive mapping and inventorisation of heritage sites, photographic documentation, drawings and population counts of plant and animal species would have been impossible to fulfil without the work of international experts and the funding of international technical as-

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<sup>343</sup> Ethiopia—The Restoration of Cultural Property—A Preliminary Report, 6-16.12.1973, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. iv; the mission’s main goal was apparently to examine whether or not Sandro Angelini had done damage to the churches through his use of concrete during the restoration works in the 1960s.

<sup>344</sup> Letter from Gerard Bolla to Tekeza Zere, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) A 136.

<sup>345</sup> UNDP/ETH 74/14, Terminal Report, 7.

sistance programmes. The establishment of the two government authorities, CRCCH and EWCO, with the help of foreign funds and expertise, meant that heritage-making occurred according to Western principles and from the onset knowledge production occurred within international expert networks, albeit under the control of the government. As a result, knowledge of Ethiopia circulated worldwide, contributing to the generation of an image of Ethiopia compatible with Western historiography and shaped by Western ideas of Ethiopia, with Ethiopian national heritage a foreign domain and an elite representation from the beginning.

### **The “boom years” - making Ethiopian heritage World Heritage**

With the institutional history of heritage-making in Ethiopia and the information contained in the UNESCO reports in mind, it is easy to understand why Ethiopia was able to respond productively when the invitation was circulated in 1978 for applications to the World Heritage List. The Ethiopian government had reached its peak institutional capacity for heritage-making by that time, after two decades of intensive international assistance that included a build up of institutions as well as specific sites. Personal and professional networks had formed over the period, and international heritage experts were able to act as brokers, helping to connect the remotely located Ethiopian heritage sites with the central government and the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

The success of all Ethiopian requests to any of the international organisations for technical and financial assistance was essentially based upon a well-running system and a network of experts in place, with connections and channels already well established. And the field of conservation activities was no exception to this fact. The impact of these decade-long efforts to build up the institutional heritage-making capacities in Ethiopia showed considerable results. Because many international experts were already involved in relevant conservation activities in both the natural and cultural fields within Ethiopia (with UNESCO providing the most prominent platform for them), Ethiopian national heritage was registered and recorded by Western standards. The extensive documentation that existed, a prerequisite for the positive evaluation of the World Heritage nomination through ICOMOS, had been created for the main Ethiopian heritage sites either in the context of the research of the “Institut”, through prior UNESCO expert missions, or the WWF specialists working in the Simien Mountains. Through the experts and consultants present in the country, Ethiopia was able to submit nominations that could relatively smoothly pass evaluation by ICOMOS and IUCN according to their scientific standards while only having national resources at its disposal that represented the bare necessities of



heritage-making infrastructure. Because of the ongoing project ETH/74/014, institutional capacities were in place to attend to the newly ratified World Heritage Convention. In fact, in the context of the extent of the project ETH /74/014, the World Heritage Nominations appear like a side effect of a large-scale plan to establish proper institutionalised national heritage conservation.

After the commencement of the project ETH/74/14 for the “Presentation and Preservation of selected sites”, the associated expert and the architect restorer of the project carried out extensive and detailed documentation and prepared information on management plans for individual sites as well as the national inventory. These management plans and the project activities presented important practical stepping-stones for the nomination of selected sites as World Heritage.<sup>346</sup> The preparation of Ethiopian heritage sites for inclusion in the World Heritage programme was foreseen as a part of the project from the beginning, and the experts employed for the project “took active part in draft completion of the nomination forms.”<sup>347</sup>

The historian Berhanu Abebe, who served as director of the CRCCH during that time, was well-versed in international collaboration in the field of heritage-making and historic research, and immediately understood the relevance of the invitation to submit nominations to the World Heritage programme in increasing potential support from the international community for the conservation of Ethiopian heritage. In addition to the support received from the ETH/74/014 project team, Berhanu Abebe turned to UNESCO’s Division of Cultural Heritage, requesting a “Consultant for the Preparation of the Drawing-up a World Heritage List”:

In conformity with the World National and Cultural Heritage Convention I should like to request a Consultant for a four weeks stay in Ethiopia to assist our Department in drawing-up a list of outstanding sites and monuments to be presented for inclusion in the World Heritage List. We consider this request being a logical consequence of the Ethiopian Government’s ratification of the mentioned convention and we give the request activity high priority. At the same time we want to emphasize the support which the visit of the Consultant could give to our newly created Inventory Department as well as to the preparation for the implementation of the resolution 19/126.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Job description from 23.3.1978, UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. vi.

<sup>347</sup> Note from Erik Olsen to Berhanu Abebe, 8.9.1978, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. vii.

<sup>348</sup> Letter from Berhanu Abebe to Percy Stulz, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 (100) A 218.

As a result, the Iranian archaeologist Firouz Bagherzadeh, of the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, who had completed similar assistance in several other countries, was sent to Ethiopia and assisted with the preparation of the World Heritage nominations.<sup>349</sup> The nomination list in 1978 resembles in large parts the main areas of UNESCO's heritage-making activity in Ethiopia.<sup>350</sup> Despite the intense conservation activities at the selected Ethiopian heritage sites, only a few of them eventually progressed far enough in the heritage-making process so as to qualify for the World Heritage nomination. Therefore not all of the nominated sites formed a part of the "Historic Route" or the sites of the project ETH 74/014. And still, for several of the sites submitted, the documentation was deemed too insufficient to be considered according to the IUCN and ICOMOS evaluation and they were declined World Heritage status.<sup>351</sup>

The UNESCO missions and their ramifications in the Ethiopian administration elucidate a clear causality between the "heritage boost" for institutional heritage-making through UNESCO and the "heritage boom" through the increase in archaeological and paleontological research work going on during the 1960s and 70s in general, and the consequent "boom years" of Ethiopian heritage-making in the period 1972-1978.

Ethiopia had a key role in conservation for development projects of UNESCO. The history of the organisations which would eventually serve as advisory bodies to the World Heritage Committee, IUCN and ICOMOS, has more than some points of connection with the making of Ethiopian national heritage as World Heritage. As one of the first countries to respond to UNESCO's programme activities in heritage and wildlife conservation in the 1960s, Ethiopia was the target location of several of the first missions and projects for cultural and natural heritage conservation. It was Julian Huxley's mission report that first suggested the elevation of Ethiopian heritage into an international concern, and Julian Huxley was also a key figure in the founding process of IUCN. Several conservation specialists of ICCROM were dispatched on missions for the presentation and preservation of Ethiopian monumental heritage, including the institutional build up of Ethiopian con-

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<sup>349</sup> Cable from Percy Stulz to Firouz Bagerzadeh, March 1978, in: UNESCO 069:72 (100) A 218.

<sup>350</sup> UNESCO, Bureau of the World Heritage Committee, List of nominations to the World Heritage List and of requests for co-operation received from States Parties, 31.5.1978, WHC CC.78/CONF.010/07

<sup>351</sup> Melka-Kontoure, Yeha, Bale Mountain National Park, and the Abijatta Shala Lake National Park as well as the Eritrean sites of Adulis and Matara. "All these nominations were deferred by the World Heritage Committee due to the absence of the necessary documentation, requests by the Advisory Bodies for more thorough site evaluations, as well as the submission of a tentative list of properties which Ethiopia intended to nominate. Furthermore, neither of the two natural sites, Bale Mountain National Park and Abijatta Shall Lakes National Park, were yet legally defined and protected under Ethiopian legislation." Peter Stott and Flora van Regteren Altena, "Report of a Mission to Ethiopia to Conduct a Workshop on Management Plans for World Heritage Sites and to Examine the Current Status of World Heritage Sites in Ethiopia, 17.-25. September 2004" (UNESCO, October 22, 2004), 2, in: UNESCO, CLT/WHC/NOM 10.

servation authorities. ICOMOS, finally, in 1978, evaluated proposals for sites and projects in Ethiopia that several of its members had been working on in the previous years.

### 3.3 The Western image of Ethiopian heritage

The success story of Ethiopian heritage-making was clearly linked to the pre-existing intense activities of UNESCO and international researchers in the country. However, a point that is particularly worth drawing attention to is that of the particular image of Ethiopia that prevailed within expert circles and beyond. In a fortunate amalgamation of Ethiopian historiography and heritage practice with Western representations and projections a specific image of Ethiopia was constructed, one that presented it as Africa's only non-African country, endowed with civilisation, and therefore history and heritage as opposed to just folkloristic art. This image allowed for the perfect matching of selected Ethiopian heritage sites with the markers of authenticity for heritage as defined by Western experts when knowledge about Ethiopian cultural and natural heritage started to circulate through the expanding international networks. Publishing activities in particular, facilitated through UNESCO, contributed to the broad reach of the international heritage-expert's work.

Ethiopia's cultural heritage, *per* the mediation of UNESCO, raised favourable awareness in the broader public and was featured prominently several times in UNESCO publications. The sudden increase of photographic images relating to Ethiopia in these publications is particularly noteworthy. Not only were UNESCO's publications in the *Courier*<sup>352</sup> or in scientific organs relevant to the promotion of the new image of Ethiopia to a Western intellectual public, but there was also a broader range of publications from experts or those declared to be such. This was an extensive pool that reached beyond the sphere of conservation specialists that included diplomats, entrepreneurs, travellers and researchers alike, all of which communicated their findings and observations to each other, institutions, governments and the general public. The emerging fields of cultural and natural tourism, as well as the travel and exploration activities of foreign experts posted in Ethiopia, resulted in a growing number of publications and reports during the 1960s and 1970s. The most important common feature in these reports of Ethiopia was the presentation of a non-African, old empire. In this narrative, emphasis was placed on Ethiopia being a culture with non-African and Christian roots. This was employed to explain Ethiopian cul-

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<sup>352</sup> More generally about the *Courier*: Maurel, *Histoire*, 159, 160.

ture's quality as a civilisation, to which one could ascribe a certain superiority and even supremacy.

### The *Courier* articles

The UNESCO *Courier* featured articles about Ethiopia on several occasions between 1959 and 1967, all of which focused on these aspects. In 1959, an article titled "The Greatness of Ethiopia", first introduced the argument, leading from the geographical features of Ethiopia which "call to mind some of Europe's mountains rather than Africa", that the Ethiopian people had a unifying kinship to the white race "despite their dark skins" with the result "that long ago a civilisation grew up which distinguishes Ethiopia from the Negro-inhabited parts of Africa, by which it is largely surrounded, and which gives to the country affinities with the lands of ancient civilisation—Egypt, Syria and Arabia".<sup>353</sup> The article continues in praise of the substantive age of Ethiopian civilisation, as well as the high stage of development and uninterrupted, untouched continuous preservation, correlating these to Arabian provenance and firm Christian belief. In addition, images of the Aksum Obelisks are featured on the first page of the magazine, declaring Ethiopian history to be "one of the most intriguing chapters in African history".<sup>354</sup> Although this entire *Courier* issue dedicated to "Africa's Lost Past" was not short of articles about other African kingdoms and civilisations, written in the context of the endeavour of the African History project<sup>355</sup>, the article on Ethiopia stood out because it insisted on the continuity of empire as opposed to the "lost", "unknown" or "forgotten" ones of other African countries. Ethiopia was distinguished because, in the eyes of the editors and writers of this *Courier* issue,—as opposed to the rest of the African continent—its degree of civilisation had supposedly allowed it to remain in charge of its own history.

In 1961 UNESCO published a volume on Ethiopian manuscript paintings in the UNESCO World Art Series (UWAS).<sup>356</sup> The production of the album reveals an attitude typical of the Western discovery of hidden treasures. Initially, WHO's maternal health specialist, the German Otto Jaeger, stationed in Ethiopia from around 1958 onwards, turned to UNESCO after having seen some ancient manuscripts while traveling in the northern region around Gondar in a private capacity. He suggested to UNESCO that they should attend to them.<sup>357</sup> Together with an Italian photographer, the editor of the UWAS Peter Bellew, and

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<sup>353</sup> Jean Dorese, "The Greatness of Ethiopia," *UNESCO Courier* 12, no. 10 (October 1959): 30.

<sup>354</sup> N. N., "Giant Obelisk of Ancient Ethiopia," *UNESCO Courier* 12, no. 10 (October 1959): 2.

<sup>355</sup> See ch. 1.3.

<sup>356</sup> Stephen G. Wright, Otto Arnold Jäger, and Jules Leroy, *Ethiopia: Illuminated Manuscripts* (Paris: New York Graphic Society, 1961).

<sup>357</sup> Letter from Otto Jaeger, no date, in: UNESCO 7 UWAS (63).

Dr. Jaeger, considered as expert for Ethiopian manuscript paintings in the context of this project, undertook a tour of several weeks to gather the necessary material for the book. The correspondence running in parallel to the production of the book reveals a strong sense of adventurism and entitlement, and an ostensible “us” and “them” perspective on Ethiopian people. Even the more distinguished research experts who were commissioned to write introductory essays for the volume reciprocated their explicit remarking of their “discovery” of the manuscript paintings on several occasions.<sup>358</sup>

Upon publication of the completed volume, the *Courier* dedicated an article to the topic, written by Abbé Jules Leroy, author of one of the book’s introductory essays and former director of the “Institut”. Again, the article emphasised the unique qualities of Ethiopian civilisation:

Here, at an elevation of seven to thirteen thousand feet, was created and developed a civilisation which, from the point of view of political and cultural achievement and from that of the artistic monuments which record its long history, has no parallel in all Tropical Africa.<sup>359</sup>

This article, while generally similar in tone and ideas to the 1959 one, once again explained the concept of a non-Negroid race, continuous advanced civilisation, and a stronger link to the Arabian peninsula than to Africa. Additionally Leroy insisted very strongly that only through Christianity had a “flowering of art”, on par with that of the Byzantine world, arrived and developed in Ethiopia.<sup>360</sup> Otto Jaeger, who was criticised by the others involved in the book’s production for his scientifically unsound interpretation of the Ethiopian manuscript paintings<sup>361</sup>, was nonetheless allowed to pen his own article on the paintings three years later in 1964 in the *Courier*, and was referred to as “author of several works on Ethiopian painting”.<sup>362</sup> In a more popular scientific tone, he focused on art as a “folk tradition” and his article was devoid of the term “civilisation”. However, he insisted on the continuity and greatness of the culture, and for illustration he chose photos of contemporary Ethiopia resembling scenes from the old paintings, such as religious procedures and clothing habits, aiming to depict a lifestyle of the Ethiopian people that had remained unchanged throughout the centuries. This article pointed out in direct terms that Ethiopia “culturally belongs to the world of the orient”<sup>363</sup>, and was rich in ori-

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<sup>358</sup> Project correspondence, in particular between Stephen Wright and Peter Bellew, in: UNESCO 7 UWAS (63).

<sup>359</sup> Jules Leroy, “The Art of Ethiopia’s Painter-Scribes,” *UNESCO Courier* 14, no. 12 (December 1961): 30.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid. this research perspective however, is certainly not surprising giving Leroy’s clerical provenance.

<sup>361</sup> Several letters in: UNESCO 7 UWAS (63).

<sup>362</sup> Otto Jaeger, “Art of Ethiopia,” *UNESCO Courier* 17, no. 10 (October 1964): 23.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 19.

entalist descriptions and attitudes. It was in this regard not far from the other, more scientifically sound articles.

Richard H. Howland's 1967 mission concerning the establishment of the Ethiopian antiquities administration<sup>364</sup> prompted him to write an article for the *Courier*. Howland introduced his readers to the subject with the impression of a deserted, uninhabited country, building up to the surprising, unexpected discovery of the "incredible richness of the antiquities of Ethiopia"<sup>365</sup> upon his arrival. Interestingly, Howland stressed this aspect:

This is a land of contrasts, it is so highly developed as a leader in contemporary African affairs, and yet so remote and medieval and untouched in its hinterlands. The antiquities are glorious and of international significance to archaeologists and art historians, but one travels to seek them outside the capital.<sup>366</sup>

Unlike former articles, Ethiopian history was not a main focus here. Instead it centred on the value of its remains as veritable antiquities living up to Western notions of the concept. Nonetheless, similar lines of argumentation reflecting the mainstream ideas of Ethiopian studies at that time were emphasised, although in more subtle language, speaking of "a sophisticated development that reflects Arab as well as European connexions".<sup>367</sup> In tone the article reads like an updated variant of the adventurism of the earlier articles, in the style of travel writing, pointing out the explorative challenge of the journey to the Ethiopian antiquities, but also mentioning the nascent touristic efforts and, of course, UNESCO's efforts to unify scientific efforts for research and preservation.

### **Foreign experts as hobby-archaeologists**

Beginning in the 1950s, Ethiopia's cultural heritage, especially the sites of early Christian worship such as the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela or the Tigray rock-churches, became known to the growing number of foreign experts that came to the country as diplomats or development workers. In the same period, natural heritage had also attracted interest, and Ethiopia was becoming known as a country for ornithologists and those interested in smaller rare animals. It also promised opportunities to observe nature away from the big game safaris and hunting-oriented tourism that was prevalent in other African countries.

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<sup>364</sup> see above, 2.2.

<sup>365</sup> Howland, "Journey," 39.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

The unique landscape of the highland-plateau also attracted mountaineers and those interested in the country's geographic features.<sup>368</sup>

Most of the first tourists in Ethiopia had not travelled purely for the purpose of visiting the country itself, but were there already to serve in the framework of development co-operation. These foreign experts had a decided practical advantage in comparison with regular international tourists. Outside of the capital and larger towns, mobility in Ethiopia was very limited. Though domestic flights connected the most important towns with Addis Ababa, any travel in the countryside required a four-wheel-drive with an experienced driver, or horses, mules, and guides, due to the condition of the transport routes and general problems of navigation, especially during the rainy season. These challenging circumstances rendered traveling in Ethiopia a costly and time-consuming enterprise, which required a certain flexibility in terms of schedule, and was difficult to organise from afar when devoid of local contacts.<sup>369</sup>

A particularly good example of the image production undertaken by the hobby-archaeologists is the so-called discovery of the numerous rock churches in Tigray, northern Ethiopia, through a number of foreigners during the 1950s and 1960s. These rock churches were located in a remote and secluded part of northern Ethiopia, and had supposedly existed as continuous places of worship over several centuries and contained murals as well as Christian manuscripts. Their existence had intrigued some of the international development workers who were posted to the region, and word of them quickly spread to Addis Ababa. One of these workers was Otto Jaeger,<sup>370</sup> who was posted on a WHO assignment in Tigray and had started exploring the churches near him. A story similar to that of Otto Jaeger is that of Ivy Pearce, born in Great Britain and raised in New Zealand, a nurse, missionary and teacher at the Haile Selassie I University.<sup>371</sup> During her time in Ethiopia, she travelled to the rock-churches of Tigray several times, initially inspired by Otto Jaeger's reports. She organised these tours as field trips for herself and other interested foreigners. In 1972, with Otto Jaeger, she published the guide book *Antiquities in*

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<sup>368</sup> Brown, "Ethiopia - Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources," 2; Ethiopian Tourist Organisation and Jill Last, *Endemic Mammals of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Artistic Printers, 1982); Emil K. Urban, *Shell Guide to Ethiopian Birds* (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian Tourist Organization, 1980).

<sup>369</sup> Organised trips (like the one offered from Swan Tours, see ch. 5) were taking place but presented an exception. The number of available hotel beds and the general tourist statistics illustrate the extent of tourism, Gaidoni, "Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development," 51-53; IANUS, Organizzazione per gli studi e la ricerca dell'economia applicata - S. p. A., *Ethiopian Tourist Development Plan* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1969), 22-24.

<sup>370</sup> see above

<sup>371</sup> Pearce, *An Ethiopian Harvest*, back cover.

*Northern Ethiopia*.<sup>372</sup> Ivy Pearce notably glorified the early Christian tradition and its continuous existence in her writings, stating that her own Christian belief had prompted her to spread the knowledge about the rock-churches and Ethiopia in general. In terms of more official and institutional research, the “Institut” would only embark on its first scientific, systematic mission of the churches in 1970, ten years after Otto Jaeger’s first tour.<sup>373</sup> At the beginning of the 1960s, barely any general introductory literature, travel writing or guide books on Ethiopia existed, and writings and reports of private travels and tours in Ethiopia were received with great interest by European publishers and magazines.<sup>374</sup> The earliest book of this kind was the illustrated book *Lalibela* by Irmgard Bidder, published in 1959 and containing a report of her travel there, with numerous photographs of the rock-hewn churches, as well as her attempt at periodisation and connecting Ethiopian history within the occidental historiography.<sup>375</sup> In her foreword, she declared her intention: “This book intends to direct the reader’s attention to a historical and religious centre of Ethiopia and to inspire further works of research.”<sup>376</sup> Bidder was the wife of the German ambassador to Ethiopia and for her expedition she was able to rely on the official support of the government as well as the church.<sup>377</sup> Like Ivy Pearce later, she was officially received by the governor of Tigray and was equipped by him with mules, guides and armed guards for the entire time of the trip.<sup>378</sup>

Between 1964 and 1967, Georg Gerster, a Swiss photographer holding a PhD in philosophy, travelled around Ethiopia and also published a book about Lalibela. The essays for his book were contributions from scientific experts, and he produced high-quality aerial photographs, publishing his images in *National Geographic* and other internationally acclaimed magazines.<sup>379</sup> For Gerster, his stay in Ethiopia represented his personal “search for the holy grail”, which he claimed to have found in the isolation and intensity of the early Christian tradition he experienced in Lalibela. Ethiopia was not Gerster’s first engagement producing images for the cause of universal heritage—he had already photographed some

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<sup>372</sup> Otto Jaeger and Ivy Pearce, *Antiquities of North Ethiopia: A Guide* (Stuttgart: Brockhaus, 1974); Ivy Pearce, “An Andrews Adventure and Pearce’s Pilgrimage to the Cave and Rock Churches of Lasta,” *Ethiopia Observer* 13, no. 1 (1969): 142–63.

<sup>373</sup> N. N., “Une Mission Scientifique Etudie Les Eglises-Rocs Du Tigre,” *Ethiopie Nouvelles Touristiques* 2, no. 7 (Juillet 1973): 1.

<sup>374</sup> R.D. Greenfield, “Ethiopian Itineraries - Some Routes in Northern Ethiopia,” *Ethiopia Observer* 4, no. 4 (1963): 313.

<sup>375</sup> Irmgard Bidder, *Lalibela*, (= Alte Kulturen U. Völker) (Köln: DuMont Schauberg, 1959).

<sup>376</sup> “Dieses Buch [...] möchte die Aufmerksamkeit der Leser auf ein historisches und religiöses Zentrum Äthopiens lenken und die Forschung der Wissenschaftler anregen.”, [translation by the author], *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>377</sup> Entering the churches, especially for the purpose of photographing murals and manuscripts, required not only an official permit and letter of recommendation, it depended ultimately on the final decision of the priest in charge of guarding the site. All of the books and articles discussed here give a detailed account of these difficulties.

<sup>378</sup> Pearce, “Adventure”; Bidder, *Lalibela*, 31–33.

<sup>379</sup> Georg Gerster, “Searching Out Medieval Churches in Ethiopia’s Wilds,” *National Geographic*, December 1970, 856–84.



of the most spectacular images for the Nubian Monuments Campaign.<sup>380</sup> Gerster in fact became one of the most important producers of images for the occidental historical discourse that had evolved since the 1960's around the alleged re-discovery of Ethiopia.<sup>381</sup> Due to their rich and unique images, these new publications were received with vivid interest by the general public and within the field of Ethiopian studies. The detailed documentation of the churches and religious ceremonies were considered highly valuable and appreciated by researchers. The hypotheses brought forward by the lay-historians, however, faced criticism.<sup>382</sup> Ethiopian cultural and natural heritage had by that time surpassed its existence as a niche interest known only to a few experts, and was no longer a hermetic discourse of insiders. The establishment of these broader international networks, that included, but were not limited to experts and international organisations, are an important factor in the image and knowledge production that formed part of the making of Ethiopian heritage during the 1960s and 1970s.

The examples of these publications demonstrate how the image of Ethiopia as a country of the "Great Tradition" made an international career, beginning in the 1950s. They also demonstrate that knowledge production was not exclusive to experts, but included other actors as well. They were a phenomenon accompanying the "boom years" of Ethiopian heritage-making in the 1960s and 1970s.

### **The heritage-hiatus from 1981-1991**

The superlative narratives of Ethiopia peaked with the discovery of the supposedly oldest humanoid remains in 1974. Even though paleontological expeditions were conducted in Ethiopia since 1902 (Omo Valley), only in the 1960s did Ethiopian excavation sites of early human stone tools and humanoid remains gain global attention, inside the scientific community as well as from the general public. In the Omo Valley, a primary site of interest with a unique richness of geological and paleontological remains, a multidisciplinary team of French, Kenyan and US-researchers unearthed, among other things, the skeleton of *Lucy* or *dinknesh*, then the oldest known humanoid remains. Lucy and other fossils quickly revealed to serve as a powerful image spreading and creating the idea of Ethiopia as the "cradle of humanity" —an image that fitted well into the existing narrative of

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<sup>380</sup> For example the photos of the dismantling of the Nubian monuments, see ch.1.3; Letter from Conrad A. Beerli to Georg Gerster, 30.9.63, in: UNESCO 069:72, A 14; Georg Gerster, "Saving the Ancient Temples at Abu Simbel," *National Geographic*, May 1966, 694-742.

<sup>381</sup> N. N., "Un Imagier de l'Ethiopie: Le Dr. Georg Gerster," *Ethiopie Nouvelles Touristiques* 1, no. 10 (1972): 3.

<sup>382</sup> Especially, Irmgard Bidder's attempt to argue for a pre-Christian origin of the churches was considered untenable. Nonetheless, the book still presented a milestone for the research on Lalibela because of its detailed photographs and drawings; Sylvia Pankhurst, "Mrs. Bidder on the Trail," *Ethiopia Observer* 4, no. 7 (June 1960): 229-34.

Ethiopia as one of the oldest advanced civilisations in Africa with a supposedly unceasing legacy.<sup>383</sup>

The sensational finds of the oldest known humanoid paleontological remains in the Lower Valley of the Omo and the vast findings in the Lower Valley of the Awash had not only justified two World Heritage recognitions for the sites, which were otherwise remote and difficult to access. It had drawn focus of numerous foreign research teams to the sites. From an early point, the situation in the excavation fields in the Omo and the Awash Valley was a contested territory, since sensational finds were expected. After the discovery of Lucy, the increased international attention made it more and more difficult for the government to maintain the mainly bureaucratic control they had successfully held over the processes.<sup>384</sup>

Part of the controlling mechanism was demanding a strict procedure of only temporary export of findings and making renewed permits conditional on the return of the exported objects. Every expedition party worked under the supervision and within the strict permission framework of the CRCCH, while being funded exclusively by foreign institutions, such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or the Musée de l'homme in Paris. However, the administration and the conservation and research infrastructure in Ethiopia was overwhelmed with the requirements that came with the sensational findings—laboratories, museums, trained staff. Fierce competition among the researchers created an additional difficulty. The situation for paleontology eventually escalated to a point where the government decided to halt all research and stopped giving out permits altogether. In an attempt to remain in control, the Ethiopian government announced a complete ban on paleontological excavations between 1981 and 1991.<sup>385</sup>

To understand the dynamics of Ethiopian heritage-making, it is important to understand the popularity of the image of Ethiopia as the cradle of humanity, as the only Christian African country, as a country with an advanced civilisation, written tradition and monumental remains. Furthermore it is important to understand that heritage-making was implemented as part foreign effort, part government strategy, and UNESCO's involvement accelerated this process and connected it to larger international networks. The heritage discourse and the associated dimension of locating and visually representing identi-

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<sup>383</sup> "Anthropologist's Discovery Pushes Back Man's History a Million [sic] Years", *The Ethiopian Herald*, 16.01.1979; Ethiopia, ed., *Ethiopia: A Cradle of History* (Addis Ababa: Ministry of Information, Dept. of Press, 1989).

<sup>384</sup> Interview with Jean-Renaud Boisserie, 16.5.2016, Addis Ababa; Donald Johanson and Maitland A. Edey, *Lucy: The Beginnings of Humankind* (London: Granada Publ., 1982); Niall Finneran, *Lucy to Lalibela: Heritage and Identity in Ethiopia in the Twenty-First Century*, 2013.

<sup>385</sup> Roger Lewin, "Ethiopia Halts Prehistory Research," *Horn of Africa* 5, no. 4 (1982): 51-55.

ties were a critical element, but so was the installation of heritage practice as a state domain.

## 4. Internal and External Politicisation of Heritage in Ethiopia

The establishment of Ethiopian national heritage was not only characterised by heavy international involvement, but also by a continuous internal and external politicisation of heritage. Heritage emerged as a new political resource in a conflict- and crisis-ridden Ethiopia during the 1960s and 1970s. This aspect of heritage as a resource would increase in magnitude for those sites that would become affiliated with a larger international context in the course of the World Heritage nominations.

Because of the revolutionary decade of the 1970s and regional conflicts in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopian nation-building cannot be clearly understood as a continuous process. Rather than focusing on the ruptures of the revolution, however, Ethiopian history throughout the twentieth century can be seen to be characterised by a continuous process of regime centralisation. The politicisation of heritage is best interpreted along the trajectory of the centralisation of power. Establishing national heritage as a state domain in Ethiopia was an act of manifesting political power, aimed at invoking national unity and identity in a fragile and multi-ethnic Ethiopian state that was struggling to hold territorial authority in several areas. The concentration of the main heritage sites in the northern part of the country was no coincidence. Rather it served a two-fold purpose: the installation of a physical governmental presence and the establishment of a historical narrative of a "Greater Ethiopia". Historiography and heritage-making became substantial elements in the domestic and regional political conflicts that evolved before and after the 1974 revolution— for all the stakeholders involved.

To externally politicise heritage within the context of international relations, the narrative of the uncolonised empire was employed to maintain and bolster the image of a politically strong, independent country. The symbolic charging of Ethiopian history in the context of the African liberation movement supported the establishment of heritage-making as a political strategy and the use of heritage to create an image of a strong country. This image was supposed to balance out the appearance of economic weakness and environmental crisis, while at the same time still allowing for the attraction of foreign investment and development assistance.

In this broader socio-political context, the first Ethiopian World Heritage sites reveal in an exemplary manner the impact of the internationally acclaimed status on the local level, demonstrating that it is not always easy to assess, to whose benefit and to whose detriment heritage was turned into a resource.

## 4.1 Crafting national identity through heritage in Ethiopia after 1955

History and heritage, as foundations for the construction of national identity, have a special role in the transformation of Ethiopian society over the past hundred years, and more acutely since the 1960s. To understand this, it is necessary to understand the diverse composition of the Ethiopia as a multi-ethnic society populating a vast territory, stretching over different geographical and climate zones.

It is within this context, that the national question is seen by many as one of the core continuities along which the political revolutions and conflicts in Ethiopia during the twentieth century developed.<sup>386</sup> Heritage-making is a key political strategy for all stakeholders involved in the contested national question. Both cultural identity and socio-political inequality became politicised in the framework of nation-building and revolutionary transformation. Beginning under Haile Selassie I in the 1960s, the construction of national identity was a state project, employing education and historiography to graft a dominant historical narrative of an Amharic “Greater Ethiopia” onto the existing socio-political realities.

### North-south and centre-periphery inequality and constructed diversity

The disintegrated nature of an overall Ethiopian identity becomes evident when reviewing the manifold different attempts to categorise the composition of Ethiopian society. There is no one common sense model which serves as the starting point to explain modern Ethiopia, but many individual interpretations. This is true not only of more directly political or otherwise propagandistic writings, but also in most works from the field of Ethiopian studies.<sup>387</sup>

As a starting point, Ethiopia could be divided according to four major religious groups: Orthodox-Christian, Muslim, Falasha-Jewish and various pagan traditions. It can also be divided according to the nine major language groups: Amhara, Tigrina, Gurage, Saho, Gada, Somali, Sidama, Afar and Beja. Classifying these as ethnic groupings, however, presents the most problematic dimension of categorization of the diversity of the Ethiopian

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<sup>386</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia: The Ethiopian Student Movement, 1960-1974*, 2014, 187-221.

<sup>387</sup> See the overview in Teshale Tibebu, *Making*, xxii-xxiv; most of the works cited here vary from each other in how they conceptualise the base line of distinctions in Ethiopian society, e.g. Levine, *Greater*, 29; John Markakis and Nega Ayele, *Class and Revolution in Ethiopia* (Nottingham : Spokesman, 1978), 21-29; Clapham, *Transformation*, 20-26; Bahru Zewde, *History*, 1-10; Teshale Tibebu, *Making*, 3-18; Perham, *Government*, 49-69; Gascon, *La Grande Ethiopie*, 204, 205; Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet, *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia* (London: Hurst & Company, 2015), 17-22.

society. Historically, many of today's ethnic identities cannot be traced back long before the nineteenth century, for only a few of them have a written tradition and it is the subject of ongoing debate as to how the ethnic groups in the Horn of Africa, evolved over time and along which lines they should be distinguished from one another.<sup>388</sup> And while some works of research calculate over seventy languages, these languages often just vary to the degree of a dialect from each other. To make a language group equal to an ethnicity is in most cases flawed and inappropriate. Likewise, ethnicities do not run along the geographical or geological borders, nor along administrative units. Save for the Fala-sha-Jewish, religious affiliation is spread across the linguistic groups and the regions. For a more complete picture it is necessary to look at several maps for each—religion, language, climate, administrative units—in order to understand that these categories and their delineation play a crucial role in most social and political conflicts in recent Ethiopian history.

One way to grasp the influential historical trajectories is to look at the Semitic highland communities with a tradition of sedentary ox-plough agriculture of grain crops in the north, and the pastoralist, nomadic low-land communities, relying on starch crops, in the south. In many ways, the history of Ethiopia is indeed a history of its natural resources and can be understood largely as an environmental history. While the variety of geographical and climate zones, ranging from mountainous highland regions to lowland deserts and tropical rainforests, appears to offer an obvious and more neutral feature of diversification, the socio-political implications of categorising landscapes are quite significant as this process is far from being unanimously conducted, or appreciated.<sup>389</sup> Communities, government agencies and international experts each have varying interpretations of the existing categories, and environmental crisis and the exploitation of natural resources influence the value ascribed to different zones.<sup>390</sup> It was within national state politics that these concepts of an environmental determination of Ethiopian society were established alongside cultural identities as defining elements for an Ethiopian historiography.<sup>391</sup> Several competing international mapping missions during the 1960s and 1970s

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<sup>388</sup> On the problem of the political construction of ethnicities in Ethiopia see the introduction in Donald Donham, *The Southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia: Essays in History and Social Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986); and the very detailed break down of the proclaimed groups and identities and the subaltern position especially of the Oromo in: Éloi Ficquet and Dereje Feyissa, "Ethiopians in the Twenty-First Century: The Structure and the Transformation of the Population," in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: C. Hurst & Co Publishers, 2015), 17–51.

<sup>389</sup> Very differentiated maps for climate and crop divisions are provided in Gascon, *La Grande Ethiopie*, 202, 206.

<sup>390</sup> Bertrand Hirsch, "Une histoire de la violence," *Etudes rurales* 197 (2016): 173.

<sup>391</sup> Guillaume Blanc and Grégory Quenet, "Les Études Éthiopiennes et L'environnement," *Etudes Rurales* 197, no. 1 (2016): 17–19.

contributed to a database of maps on Ethiopia that has yet to be deconstructed, in order to be properly interpreted.<sup>392</sup>

The north-south division of Ethiopia is best understood as being “not simply geographical, nor merely historical”<sup>393</sup> and is first and foremost a helpful analytical starting point, important to understand the socio-political aspects of Ethiopian history in general and indispensable to understanding the history of the Ethiopian World Heritage sites in a national and local context.

The complex diversity of the Ethiopian society reflected a profound structural inequality that characterised Ethiopian society at the beginning of the 1960s. The reasons for this inequality have their roots in a number of historical-political developments. Throughout the twentieth century, the evolving hierarchy of the different ethnic groups in relation to the central government and to the provincial rulers can be traced in a geographical manifestation of centre-periphery or north-south inequality.<sup>394</sup>

The nation-building process in Ethiopia started under the reign of Emperor Menelik II at the end of the nineteenth century. Menelik II realised a centralised government through imperial invasion and diplomacy, but the government failed to fully develop its capacities under his reign and was subsequently weakened in the period of Italian colonial occupation. In the course of Menelik II's twenty years of centralisation efforts, different levels of adaptation among the various Ethiopian ethnic groups to the new bureaucratic and patrimonial imperial structures and societies contributed over time, among other factors, to varying degrees of assimilation and integration into the main transformation processes of Ethiopian society overall.<sup>395</sup> While some of the provinces united under Menelik II maintained relative political power, others were completely overtaken and subject to resettlement policies. The provinces from the south in particular were forced to take in settlers from the north, and to be ruled by imposed governors who were compensated for their political and land-right losses in the north by the grant of these positions.<sup>396</sup> The varying degrees of soil-fertility in the different regions added a strong geopolitical aspect to north-south inequality. The differences in highland and lowland climate and agricultural traditions compelled the imperial regime, as well as the socialist one, to conceptual-

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<sup>392</sup> Little is known about the history of cartography in Ethiopia from 1900 on, some basic information: Wolbert Smidt, “Cartography from the 18th Century Onward,” ed. Siegbert Uhlig, *Enzyklopedia Aethiopica* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003); Mekete Belachew, “Modern Cartography,” ed. Siegbert Uhlig, *Enzyklopedia Aethiopica* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003); Mesfin W. Mariam, “The Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geographical Institute,” *Professional Geographer* 8, no. 2 (March 1956): 6.

<sup>393</sup> Markakis and Ayele, *Class*, 21.

<sup>394</sup> Levine, *Greater*, 181.

<sup>395</sup> And also a varying degree of integration in into the leading historical narrative for the nation, Toggia, “History Writing as a State Ideological Project in Ethiopia,” 335, 336.

<sup>396</sup> Bahru Zewde, *History*, 87–90.

ise the south of the country as a resource that should balance out the food, territorial and labour needs of the north.<sup>397</sup>

More relevant in terms of inequality, however, was the uneven distribution of resources, not only due to climatic and geographical features but also because of traditional systems. Exploitative sub-state level organisational structures of society encouraged and enabled the systematic extraction of surplus resources at the expense of peasants over centuries.<sup>398</sup>

The traditional land tenure system of the southern part resembled feudalism, with no private property, while the land tenure system of the north was based on private land-ownership as a major structuring aspect of social and political relations. In the process of state modernisation and centralisation of power, land in the south was redistributed to landowners from the north, which turned large parts of the population of the southern provinces into peasants with no rights to the soil they lived on. This process, which had started under Haile Selassie I's government, significantly fuelled the consolidation and mobilisation of revolutionary forces from the peasants of the south during the 1974 revolution.<sup>399</sup> North-South inequality was emphasised in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary socialist propaganda.

Just two months after the outbreak of the revolution, the Derg implemented rigorous land reform with the total nationalisation of all land and complete eradication of private land ownership. Although the legal situation of the southern population of tenants and landless peasants improved largely through this reform, in effect, the stringent state control of agricultural production, including forced resettlement and collectivisation as well as fixed government prices, put a further strain on the subsistence economy of the rural population. The growing discontent and anxiety of the rural population, in turn, fuelled the militant oppositional upsurge starting in the north and leading to the overthrow of the Derg in 1991.<sup>400</sup>

The north-south and the centre-periphery dichotomies were for a long period among the most universally held assumptions.<sup>401</sup> It does not, however, hold up to more recent analysis, which suggests viewing the periphery as a constructed political entity that would vary over time and did not constitute a homogeneous entity at any given point, nor did an idea of the "historical core zone" of the Ethiopian state. Creating a centre and a periphery began with the establishment of the new capital, Addis Ababa, around 1900, which sat at

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<sup>397</sup> Gascon, *La Grande Ethiopie*, 180–82.

<sup>398</sup> Donald E. Crummey, *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa* (London; Portsmouth: J. Currey ; Heinemann, 1986), 133.

<sup>399</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 126, 127.

<sup>400</sup> Bahru Zewde, *History*, 241–43; Dessalegn Rahmato also points out the disintegrating effect of the villagisation and land reform efforts under the Derg, Dessalegn Rahmato, *Famine and Survival Strategies: A Case Study from Northeast Ethiopia* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainst., 1991), 25, 26.

<sup>401</sup> Triulzi, "Battling," 276.



the conceptualised centre of the imagined totality of Ethiopian space.<sup>402</sup> Nonetheless, it is this constructed centre-periphery and north-south divide that must be understood in order to analyse the politicisation of heritage in Ethiopia. This real inequality, constructed into an imaginary space, explains the crucial role of claiming unity and identity in the construction of nationalism and the key role that locating heritage sites played in it. The idea of centre and periphery, and north and south, became a central structuring principle of governance and readily lent itself to a teleology of “nation building”, declaring it as essential for national unity that the peripheral regions orientate and subordinate themselves progressively to the national core of the central government. The historical narrative of state modernisation as a completion of the destiny of an Ethiopian national state in the territory of “Greater Ethiopia” and that had supposedly evolved naturally over centuries, was one constructed along these lines, and fruitfully fed into these politics.<sup>403</sup>

### **Monopolising heritage-making between cultural assimilation and contested historical narratives**

The question of national identity was a central issue complicating and threatening the progress and political climate in Ethiopia throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Defining what constituted the Ethiopian national identity was a necessary but by no means easy or uncontested task in the Ethiopian imperial and socialist state, and heritage-making formed part of this strategy aimed at navigating a multi-ethnic society through the challenges of state modernisation. In the political construction of an Ethiopian national identity, the affiliation and streamlining of cultural identities was a crucial factor, and in order to monopolise heritage-making as a state affair, a politics of cultural assimilation and censored historiography was institutionalised. All historic research and historic mediations, such as history schoolbooks and museum exhibitions, were highly censored and constantly adapted according to the political direction. Claiming the relevant existing heritage sites as national heritage, in particular the cultural heritage sites of the historic north, so as to furnish the “Great Tradition” narrative, was a strategy to stabilise the central government’s power, both imperial and socialist.

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<sup>402</sup> Donald Donham, “Old Abyssinia and the New Ethiopian Empire: Themes in Social History,” in *The Southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia: Essays in History and Social Anthropology*, ed. Wendy James and Donald Donham (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 20, 31; Alessandro Triulzi, “Nekemte and Addis Ababa: Dilemmas of Provincial Rule,” in *The Southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia: Essays in History and Social Anthropology*, ed. Wendy James and Donald Donham (Oxford: James Currey, 2002), 68; Clapham, “Controlling,” 11.

<sup>403</sup> Clapham, “Controlling,” 11.

By 1960, at the inception of the “boom years”<sup>404</sup> of Ethiopian heritage-making, the Ethiopian national state was far from the point of providing a uniform national identity for most of its citizens. In an attempt to stabilise his fragile reign, Haile Selassie I had introduced a revised constitution in 1955, which, as a part of this stabilising strategy, aimed to achieve national identity by imposing cultural assimilation on the provinces. With the revised constitution, Amharic was declared as the official language of Ethiopia, even though only 25% of the population were native speakers.<sup>405</sup> The prioritisation of Amharic as the *lingua franca* for the Ethiopian national state reinforced a cultural assimilation strategy that built on the Abyssinian narrative, essentially arguing that the imperial heritage of Axum, Lalibela and Gondar alone reached “a standard of cultural development and progress comparable to any attained by any other country in the civilised world.”<sup>406</sup> The Amharic and Semitic cultures purportedly provided the only valid historical legacy and heritage of Ethiopia, usurping all other narratives in the official representation. In the historiography, non-Christian groups were rendered into a bulk of “Jewish, Arabic and [...] Nubian immigrants”<sup>407</sup> and sidelined into a negligible influence at the margins of the Axumite empire.

An element of revolutionary propaganda was devoted to denouncing such cultural assimilation politics as part of “feudal” imperial politics. Consequently, the Derg claimed to disregard the cultural assimilation policy in favour of the strengthening of, and allowance of more autonomy to, different ethnic groups within the Ethiopian national state. Religious and language diversification were installed as official institutions after 1974, an act which served to argue that equality of all cultures and nations within the great Ethiopian nation had been achieved through the socialist government. Yet, this official promotion of the “self-determination of cultures” was executed under the leadership of the central government. However, this supposedly empowering and radical political claim left no doubt that the self-determination was nevertheless to be strictly confined to remain within the defined boundaries and authority of the Ethiopian national state. Mengistu Haile Mariam’s call for “unity or death” for the Ethiopian people<sup>408</sup> served as a propaganda slogan to some and as a threat to many others.

Religious identity played a crucial part in the consolidation of the new national identity. Haile Selassie I’s achievement of the re-nationalisation of the Ethiopian Orthodox church increased his popular success and at the same time his position over the church. The rein-

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<sup>404</sup> See ch. 3.2

<sup>405</sup> Balsvik, *Students*, 10; Paulos Milkias, *Haile Selassie, Western Education, and Political Revolution in Ethiopia* (Yonkingstown, N.Y.: Cambria Press, 2006), 53–58.

<sup>406</sup> Ministry of Information, ed., *Ethiopia, Past and Present*, Patterns of Progress, book 8 (Addis Ababa: Publications & Foreign Languages Press Dept., Ministry of Information, 1967), 11.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>408</sup> John Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1987), 245.

stallment of an Ethiopian Patriarch in position as head of the church, as opposed to the then-existing tradition of an Egyptian one, further supported his centralisation efforts, as the church became more dependent on the state and the distributed monastic institutions became weaker. Historically, the Orthodox church was an important landowner in the centralised feudal system, collecting taxes and overseeing education as well as health services in many areas, and in the process of state modernisation these functions were transferred to the government and the church was rendered into the role of an “ideologue” within the imperial government, “providing moral and divine legitimisation of the Solomonic dynasty and imperial dominance.”<sup>409</sup> After the 1974 revolution, all church property was seized and nationalised, and was, according to the socialist orientation, written out of national identity.<sup>410</sup> From 1980 onwards, religion was officially endorsed as part of the Ethiopian national identity, to gain popular support, and to establish and strengthen the identity of peaceful religious coexistence in Ethiopia and the existence of a successfully multi-ethnic state.<sup>411</sup>

From 1950, historiography was installed systematically in the nascent academic landscape, when a number of Ethiopian historians were sent to be trained in Western academic institutions in order to produce a version of Ethiopian history that could be made to compete with Western history and integrate with it. Ethiopian and non-Ethiopian historians alike “did not question the Great Tradition of a centralising, independent and unitary State rooted in an ancient past and led by an innovative monarchy”.<sup>412</sup> In effect, Ethiopian historiography, even as it became an academic discipline from the 1950s onwards, did not happen autonomously, but in the service of the national state, and largely relied on existing cultural and ideological constructs as opposed to being an investigative, empirical field. And this was the case for Ethiopian historians and foreign historians of Ethiopian history alike.<sup>413</sup>

Shortly after the first cohort of students had graduated from HSI University, they fuelled the existing landscape of national identity, historical and heritage discourse with the quest for a “true Ethiopian” way, attempting to graft Western principles, liberal values and modernisation onto the existing “distant past” and “Great Tradition” narratives assumed by the government.<sup>414</sup> Especially in the period between 1960 and 1980, the “boom years” of

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<sup>409</sup> Kostas Loukeris, “Church and Attempted Modernization in Ethiopia,” in *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Kyoto, 12-17 December 1997*, ed. Katsuyoshi Fukui, Eisei Kurimoto, and Masayoshi Shigeta, vol. 2 (Kyoto: Shokado Book Sellers, 1997), 214, 215.

<sup>410</sup> Stéphane Ancel and Éloi Ficquet, “The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) and the Challenge of Modernity,” in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: Hurst & Company, 2015), 76–80.

<sup>411</sup> Loukeris, “Church and Attempted Modernization in Ethiopia,” 216.

<sup>412</sup> Triulzi, “Battling,” 278.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*, 276–78.

<sup>414</sup> Milkias, *Haile Selassie, Western Education, and Political Revolution in Ethiopia*, 79–100.

international experts and Ethiopian heritage-making, institutional knowledge production was confronted with political turmoil and change: there was an increased imperative to identify and define an Ethiopian historical core-territory and the different regions of Ethiopia were seen as forces opposing the central power of the empire and later the socialist state.

Through the *de facto* assimilation of all cultural identities into the Amharic, Christian, north-Ethiopian cultural identity, the dominant narrative of the national identity was set and so were the representative uses of heritage and the heritage sites. The most effective institutions for enacting this linguistic and historical politics were those of education and the military.<sup>415</sup> Ethiopian society traditionally lacked a middle class, a fact seen by many as an impediment to modernisation and progress, and the military was the only available path for class mobility, which partially explains the role of the military in the revolution.<sup>416</sup> By imposing Amharic as the only language for the military, Amharisation gained significant momentum under Haile Selassie I. After the revolution, the new government was formed of leading actors from the military, in effect putting the socialist government into the hands of the newly Amharised elites.<sup>417</sup>

Haile Selassie I had put an emphasis on developing secondary and higher education, whereas after the revolution a shift in education politics towards alphabetisation and literacy resulted in an steep increase in primary education, mainly characterised by an emphasis on quantity of access, and largest possible regional coverage, rather than on quality of approach.<sup>418</sup> This strategy aimed at producing a high number of basically functional literates rather than competitively educated candidates suitable for more specialised and advanced training. In this process, a different kind of cultural dominance was introduced through the Amharisation of secondary school education, resulting in a decline of English-speaking students, and consequently the rising number of high school graduates did not translate into an equally larger number of qualified university graduates. This meant that socialist education policies led to a generational rift between a kind of “educated elite”, who had already benefitted from the imperial educational system, and the following generation of more basically-educated Ethiopians. The “educated elite”, while educat-

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<sup>415</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 193.

<sup>416</sup> Matteo Salvatore, “‘Knowledge Is an Immovable Eternal Law Which Rules the world’: Gäbre-Heywät Baykădan’s Blueprint for Ethiopia’s Sovereign Modernity,” in *Proceedings of the 16th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, ed. Svein Ege et al. (Trondheim, 2009), 129.

<sup>417</sup> Levine, *Greater*, 185, 190; Jacob Wiebel, “‘Let the Red Terror Intensify’: Political Violence, Governance and Society in Urban Ethiopia, 1976-78,” 2015, 17; Gérard Prunier, “The Ethiopian Revolution and the Derg Regime,” in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: Hurst & Company, 2015), 217-19.

<sup>418</sup> In the *zemecha* development campaign, all students enrolled in secondary schools and university were dispatched on a mandatory teaching mission into the rural areas of Ethiopia, so as to increase enforce revolutionary politics despite the lack of administrative capacities of the Derg. Clapham, “Controlling,” 15, 16.

ed before the revolution, formed a crucial part of the leadership level in post-revolutionary Ethiopia.<sup>419</sup> The imperial and bureaucratic elites, which had already been the representatives of the dominant heritage in the imperial government, therefore continued in their functions and maintained their status as elite heritage-makers after the revolution. In fact, because of the revolution the question of class was overwritten by the question of ethnicity,<sup>420</sup> which added a critical dimension to how national heritage had only been represented by the “Historic North” sites. The revolution had actualised the question of national identity and with the dimension of cultural identity had thus turned the question of national heritage and historic narratives into a much more culturally conflictual one, as heritage, once more, only represented the ruling elites of the Ethiopian state.

The new narratives feeding a national identity of the revolution might have been slightly different and focused on a narrative of decadence and malfunction in the recent empire. However, while the Great Tradition was critically attacked for its feudalistic, imperial traits, and held responsible for the inequality in Ethiopia, the socialist government also relied on a version of the unitary state in need of strong central leadership. In this logic they linked themselves back to a tradition of the “people of Ethiopia” that had to be freed from the chains of feudal repression by the socialist revolution, and brought to their true calling. A key argument of the student movements that transcended revolutionary propaganda into that of the socialist government after the revolution was to frame the Ethiopian imperial times as feudalistic, exploitative and “blood-thirsty”, having spoiled the country’s great past.<sup>421</sup> More specifically, the government pledged to make monuments and national heritage accessible to the masses, to educate everyone about the “Great Tradition” of Ethiopia to help with the socialist endeavour and declared the preservation of cultural heritage as part of the *zemecha* development campaign.<sup>422</sup>

After the 1974 revolution the conservation of natural heritage and wildlife was framed as an act of revolutionary liberation. In the official newspaper *Ethiopian Herald*, a regular series of articles was published to educate the Ethiopian public about the Ethiopian heritage and the necessity to preserve “the progressive cultural heritages of the past”<sup>423</sup> to ad-

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<sup>419</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 150–52.

<sup>420</sup> Messay Kebede, *Ideology and Elite Conflicts: Autopsy of the Ethiopian Revolution* (Lanham, Md. [u.a.]: Lexington Books, 2011), 291.

<sup>421</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 39.

<sup>422</sup> Statistics on Cultural Development in Ethiopia, February 1975 in: ARCC, 14-1, Folder 5; Ayalew Sisay, *Historical Development of Travel and Tourism in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: The Author, 2009), 162, 163.

<sup>423</sup> Cultural Revolution, Cultural Heritage, *The Ethiopian Herald*, 27.12.1978; similar articles, all in *The Ethiopian Herald*, include: „Socialist Society, Cultural Progress“, 20.12.1978; „Preserving Nations’ Relics“, 5.2.1980; Africa in Antiquity, 4.8.79; „Prelude to Party Formation – Care for Nation’s Resources and Heritage“, 25.12.82.

vance the socialist revolution and reconstruction of society. The 1978 brochure *Wildlife Conservation in Socialist Ethiopia* presents a good example:

This ancient heritage of forests and wildlife is one of the precious natural resources of Ethiopia. But over the centuries the feudal overlords, straddling the back of the country, exploited these resources and very tragically depleted them. The vast areas of land, denuded of the giant trees once that covered it, bear silent testimony to this mindless cruel destruction. [...] The feudal regime had, only of lately, made some faint attempts at conserving these wildlife resources and the forest. Still the destruction continued. But with the onset of the popular revolution in Ethiopia in 1974 which overthrew the feudal regime, conservation has gained momentum and has become a massive force. From the very beginning of the revolution, the PMAC [Provisional Military Administrative Council] declared total conservation of the wildlife and forest resources of Ethiopia as a part of its avowed policy.<sup>424</sup>

In the official representation of the socialist government, the Abyssinian, north-Ethiopian culture was still central. In publications like the book *Ethiopia—a decade of revolutionary transformation*, published in 1984 by the Ministry of Information, the country's history was utilised as a lead-up to the glorious revolutionary present, spread out over six pages and with photos of the most prominent heritage sites. The introductory section concluded with a paragraph arguing the revolution to be the historical moment of fulfilling “the determination of the Ethiopian people to defend freedom, independence, human dignity and justice”, which had been denied them by the old system.<sup>425</sup>

However, throughout the 1960s and 1970s, official politics had to compete with a lively tradition of intellectual and political discourse in which almost all oppositional groups and movements took part, and in which the case for or against assimilation and the historic identities of the major (ethnic) groups were discussed in a nuanced yet agitated and propagandistic manner. The distinct Marxist and nationalist orientation of the student movement formed the ideological basis for radicalisation and mass-mobilisation leading up to the revolution. Consequently, the aggressive use of historic narratives and heritage as a weapon in the revolution and the subsequent years influenced the political dimension of heritage, particularly as far as national heritage was concerned. In applying Marxist

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<sup>424</sup> Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Development Authority, *Wildlife Conservation in Socialist Ethiopia*. (Addis Ababa: Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Development Authority, 1978), 4.

<sup>425</sup> Ya'ityopyā šarātañioč pārti, ed., *Ethiopia: A Decade of Revolutionary Transformation, 1974-1984* (Addis Ababa: The Committee, 1984), 17.

concepts of feudalism and imperialism, the official historic narratives of empire were turned against the government in many of the student writings, justifying its overthrow.<sup>426</sup> In effect, Marxist theory served as a “continuation of dogma by other means”.<sup>427</sup> Denouncing the “Great Tradition” was a key slogan of the student movement, calling instead for the creation of a state “in which all nationalities participate equally in state affairs”. Further, the student movement strongly proclaimed its goal that no longer, “to be an Ethiopian, you will have to wear an Amhara mask[...]”,<sup>428</sup> and this was partially responsible for the success of the mass mobilisation of marginalised ethnic/regional identities. Contrasting interpretations of history and claims to heritage resulted, during the course of the student movements, not only in a revolutionary propaganda that would then reach further into the post-revolutionary government, but also in feeding the theoretical background and ideological foundation of the various national liberation fronts.<sup>429</sup> Identifying heritage as Ethiopian national heritage was necessarily interpreted as an act of domination by the unrepresented ethnic nationalities, and condemned as an act of cultural oppression. The ethnic national movements rejected the concept of an Ethiopian empire as a succession to the great, classical tradition that was simply spoiled by imperial feudalism and had to be freed by revolutionary forces. In fact, the post-1974 regime was confronted by renewed accusations that it continued the empire in a different guise and suppressed the distinct nationalities.

The Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front in particular built their insurgency on this argument and refused to let the Tigrayan heritage—after all, save for the two paleontological sites in the deserts of the Lower Valley of the Omo and the Awash, all Ethiopian World Heritage sites were located in Tigray—be affiliated with the official promoted Ethiopian identity. Similarly, the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, on the Eritrean question, as well as the Oromo and Western Somali Liberation Front, raised the accusation of colonial continuity by the Ethiopian socialist regime of the Derg, directly linking it to the expansionist tendencies of Menelik II and Haile Selassie I, and declaring it an “act of internal colonialism”.<sup>430</sup> Throughout all the social changes and transformative processes of the revolutionary decade 1970-1980, history and heritage as a spatial and symbolic representation became a crucial tool in the political opposition for marginalised groups, basically deriving a contrary version, one that rendered the “good empire” into the “bad empire”. In this climate the quest to legitimise the political present through the past became a contested

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<sup>426</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 129–30.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>428</sup> Walleigne Mekonen, On the question of nationalities in Ethiopia, quoted in: Balsvik, *Students*, 277; Marzagora, “History,” 12, 13.

<sup>429</sup> Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 258.

<sup>430</sup> Marzagora, “History,” 21.

territory, and the imperial state, the revolutionary groups and forces as well as the socialist government each had to make it a priority to monopolise the establishment and representation of heritage.

Yet, despite the strong oppositional voices in the intellectual discourse—especially those of the diaspora—heritage-making in terms of actual sites remained a state monopoly, and thus a strategy exclusively available to those holding government power. From an analytical viewpoint, the construction of identities of Tigrayans, Oromo, Eritreans, Ethiopians, Amharas and others has in itself to be seen as a set of discourses monopolising the dimension of political conflict for the constitution of these ethnic identities. In the context of the revolution, regionalist demands and historiographies attached in the service of them, and the revisionism of exiled Ethiopians, rendered the field of Ethiopian historiography as a complete minefield, on which it became ever more difficult to practice balanced research that was impervious to instrumentalisation.<sup>431</sup>

The cultural assimilation and establishment of a dominant historic narrative and of heritage sites became a mirror for the social inequalities prevailing and fuelling the civil conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s. Essentially, Ethiopian history, in the “Greater Ethiopia” narrative, remained, like many European histories, a history of the upper class or of the elites, not the peasants who composed the large majority of the population. This focus of attention on the monuments of antiquity and the medieval period reinforced the idea that the most representative and definitive Ethiopia was to be found in the north in regards to history and heritage, and left aside the larger part of the country, rendering this greater part into an “Ethiopia without monuments”,<sup>432</sup> marginalised in the narrative of national representation.

## 4.2 Heritage in political conflicts in Ethiopia

The establishment of national heritage in Ethiopia, and the underlying question of national identity, was rooted in the changing dynamics of competition for authority, territory and resources. Consequently, in territorial conflicts, claims were argued on the basis of historical narratives and heritage. Heritage identification was rooted in and linked to the construction of an image of a “Greater Ethiopia” territory, which can be found at the core of internal and external political conflicts. The linking of struggles or success, politi-

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<sup>431</sup> Triulzi, “Battling,” 279; this is also clear from the works of Western scholars at this time, e.g. Levine, *Greater*; or: Markakis and Ayele, *Class*; Graham Hancock explicitly mentions his relations with the Derg in Graham Hancock, *The Sign and the Seal* (London: Arrow, 2001), 8, 9, 43.

<sup>432</sup> According to Alain Gascon, as with the monuments, historically significant processes, such as the revolutionary years, are also exclusively located in and associated with the north; Gascon, *La Grande Ethiopie*, 13–16.



cal power, and territorial claims to a distant past was a political strategy that can be identified from the 1960s onwards in Ethiopian politics.<sup>433</sup> Heritage politics from the 1960s to the 1980s can be connected not only to the internal, regional conflicts for national or territorial sovereignty of certain groups but also to the ongoing conflicts with the bordering nations of Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti. Ethiopian national heritage was then spatially embedded not only in large-scale land-use and revolutionary conflicts, but also in the border conflicts. Defining Haile Selassie I's and Mengistu Haile Mariam's politics as colonisation, without lending oneself to the particular historiography of any of the distinct national identities in Ethiopia using this accusation in their political campaigns, opens up the possibility of interpreting the use of heritage and national parks as a powerful political tool, and shows the dangerous potential of the World Heritage label.

### **Heritage and the claim to “Greater Ethiopia”**

While competing historical narratives formed a crucial part of the revolutionary and oppositional movements in Ethiopia, they all shared a common ground in the historic anchoring of a contemporary Ethiopian society to the “Great Tradition”. In an attempt to pursue modernisation by finding a true tradition, a claim reiterated by the imperial as well as the socialist government, the Aksumite Empire was referenced as a model of success and as an anchoring point for the origin as well as the destiny and future of the Ethiopian nation in the historic discourse.<sup>434</sup> In addition to the culturally assimilated national identity, a territorial unity was manifested in the claim to “Greater Ethiopia”, insisting on a delineation of the Ethiopian empire including Eritrea and parts of Somalia (the Ogaden).

Haile Selassie I had already attempted the project of governing a unified, “Greater Ethiopia” as the leader of all ethnic groups united by the framework and the supposedly shared history of the great Ethiopian heritage. The revised constitution of 1955 consequently contained an explicit reference to this narrative and a claim to direct lineage for Haile Selassie I as a descendant of Menelik I and the Queen of Sheba— he was supposedly the 225<sup>th</sup> descendant in this direct line.<sup>435</sup>

In a way, the Derg continued these centralisation efforts in a very radical way by the means of their project of *encadrement*, a restructuring of the existing provinces as ethnic

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<sup>433</sup> Tronvoll, *War*, 59.

<sup>434</sup> This is classified as an intellectual tradition of Ethiopia which is based on importing foreign concepts as Ethiopian interpretations, resulting in using European ideas to discover a specific Ethiopian solution, and to stimulate change, Salvadore, “Knowledge,” 131.

<sup>435</sup> Richard Pankhurst, *The Ethiopians* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 24; Hancock, *Sign*, 24.

provinces, completely replacing the existing administrative units. This meant creating a national identity through the creation of a new spatial structure and breaking apart the power of existing ones.<sup>436</sup>

The ethnonationalism of the radicalised political movements was in opposition to the national unity of the claim to a “Greater Ethiopia”, and the proponents of the various ethnonationalist movements spoke of the Ethiopian empire as an Amhara-dominated colonial enterprise. This rhetoric and approach by these various movements intensified and radicalised drastically in reaction to the authoritarianism of the Derg regime.<sup>437</sup>

The exhibition of ethnicities and cultures in the museum of the Institute for Ethiopian Studies supported this colonial strategy of expressing a wide claim to territory and political power through the representation of cultures in a museum.<sup>438</sup> Complementing these political actions, the “Greater Ethiopia” claim was rigorously transported as the ideological underpinning of national representation, with most of the image production related to Ethiopian heritage, especially in the tourist promotion material and travel guides, but also in the press coverage. A map of Ethiopia, consisting of outlines delineating a blank territory on the inside, can be found on publications from all periods. The maps are filled with icons of Ethiopian heritage, mostly just antiquities, though sometimes natural sites or ethnic peoples are also presented.<sup>439</sup>

Most common was a map showing the “Greater Ethiopia” outline with isolated emblematic depictions of heritage and culture, such as in the “bird’s-eye-view” of the late 1960s Ethiopian Tourist Organisation (ETO) pamphlet, which has only the large Aksum Stela hovering over the otherwise blank space of the isolated Ethiopian outline map.

The representation of Ethiopian heritage sites on maps conceptually and practically located and defined patrimonial resources across the national landscape.<sup>440</sup> Another example of this type of map is this 1989 publication of the Ethiopian Ministry of Information, entitled *Ethiopia: A Cradle of History* with drawings of the main monuments of the World Heritage sites in Aksum, Gondar, Lalibela, Harar and the pre-historic site of Sidamo, placed within an outline map which is transparent and layered over a panoramic photo of the Ethiopian highlands, filling the entire page as a background image on the cover.

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<sup>436</sup> Clapham, “Controlling,” 14–24.

<sup>437</sup> Messay Kebede, *Ideology and Elite Conflicts*, 287–305. However, the primacy of ethnic over social and economic reasons for the insurgencies is at least questionable today and remains difficult to assess.

<sup>438</sup> Stanislaw Chojnacki, “The Preservation of Ethiopia’s Cultural Heritage (Lecture Delivered at the Meeting of the Society of Friends)” (Addis Ababa, December 18, 1969), 4, 5; Guindeuil, “Nature,” 126.

<sup>439</sup> Generally speaking, an emphasis on Ethiopia as a “people museum” can be observed in the publications under the Derg as opposed to a focus on monuments and images without people in them under Haile Selassie.

<sup>440</sup> The concept of the “patrimonial resource” is borrowed here from Lisa Breglia, who made similar findings in Mexico, Breglia, *Monumental Ambivalence*, 30.

A second, denser type of these “Greater Ethiopia” maps showed the outline filled with a collage of icons of heritage and culture, leaving no blank space in between, such as in the 1976 tourism review.<sup>441</sup> On the cover, which states in both English and Amharic the title of the brochure as well as the fact that it is published by the Ethiopian Tourism and Hotel Commission, watercolour paintings of ancient monuments, modern churches, the modern town hall of Addis Ababa, wildlife and scenes of rural and religious life, are merged into a colourful array within the outline of Ethiopia, surrounded by the completely blank and monochrome territories of the neighbouring states.

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<sup>441</sup> Ethiopian Tourism & Hotel Commission, ed., *Ma-hdara turizem = Tourism review* (Addis Ababa: Tourism Promotion Dept. of the Ethiopian Tourism & Hotel Commission, 1979).

## Land use conflicts arising from claims to heritage

The territorial claim to a “Greater Ethiopia” linked political heritage-making with the internal political and military battles arising from the north-south conflict, since, based on the official historical narrative, heritage turned into an instrument of land control in the hands of the government. Control over land held a critical relevance that fuelled the dynamics of heritage-making and its instrumentalisation.

The growing pressure on land use, arising from population growth and environmental crisis, presented key demands on the internal political and social conflicts. One attempt to de-fuse this explosive potential was the series of forced resettlement programmes initiated by the government. Under Haile Selassie I, resettlement occurred mainly as a punctual displacement of pastoral communities, because of large government-induced or approved infrastructure or agricultural developments. Yet already from 1966 onwards, large-scale resettlement schemes formed part of the development planning in Ethiopia. Introduced as a panacea for all development ailments and the strategic colonisation effort, over 10,000 households had been resettled by the time of the revolution.<sup>442</sup>

Despite the clear failure to curb the effects of the severe drought and environmental crisis on the population, resettlement was further instrumentalised and sanctioned on a national level as well as by the international community in the context of famine relief efforts. Between 1974-1986 over 500,000 people were moved and resettled, including a restructuring of existing social patterns and the dispersion of existing communities, termed “villagisation”. Beyond the proclaimed improvement of livelihood for Ethiopians affected by the drought, villagisation was an act that tried to create a consolidated path to stronger governance and state authority in all regions and areas of administration, as well as demonstrating independence and ability to both the nation and the international donors. The impact of villagisation was drastic for most affected and turned the existing problematic condition of land distribution, land use and livelihood, regional development and regional affiliation, into an acute crisis where the geopolitical dimension of the crisis became more serious and sensitive than ever. Most communities and individuals suffered, especially socially and culturally, as a result of being broken up, isolated and de-contextualised.<sup>443</sup>

Before the 1974 revolution, systems of land rights and land tenure had varied widely throughout Ethiopia, and the manifold nature of strong regional traditions and systems presented one of the biggest obstacles to forging centralised government control and a

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<sup>442</sup> Pankhurst and Piguet, *Moving*, 7.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-13.

cohesive development politics in order to improve the livelihood of the weaker regions. After the revolution, all rural land was nationalised, and all traditional tenures abolished and replaced by a collective, government-controlled ownership structure with management of the land by peasant associations. While in the south of Ethiopia, the tenant farmers and landless peasants benefitted largely from this, at least in the first instance, the peasants and land-owners of the north on the other hand largely opposed the loss of land-access and usage privileges. For them, this reform not only limited the control they had formerly held over their land, but more importantly also threatened the status and political power commonly linked to land ownership in the tenure-system of northern Ethiopia.<sup>444</sup>

The history of territorial conflicts is highly relevant for the impact of heritage and the meaning of World Heritage for Ethiopia in the 60s and 70s, as land use and ownership were such crucial and sensitive issues. The national parks in particular, and more specifically the Simien Park, due to its World Heritage status, demonstrate how heritage-making and the international claim on the land added pressure to the conflicts. National parks were deemed the most appropriate instrument of wildlife conservation in Africa, as the concept was strictly top-down and necessitated complete government ownership of the protected territory in question. Rooted in a colonial and eco-racist understanding of African wildlife conservation, the establishment of national parks was promoted in many African states, in many cases continuing the colonial practice of materialising governance over vast and undeveloped territories through conservation.<sup>445</sup> The experts of IUCN, FAO and UNESCO, in accordance with international resolutions, insisted on the legal gazetting of the park as government property, and refused support or responsibility for territories not under appropriate control.<sup>446</sup> This argumentation seemed favourable to the Ethiopian government, as it justified the demand to establish a National Park as national property, with direct government control.<sup>447</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 46–48, 161, 162.

<sup>445</sup> John Sorana Akama, “Neocolonialism, Dependency and External Control of Africa’s Tourism Industry: A Case Study of Wildlife Safari Tourism in Kenya,” in *Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations*, ed. Colin Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker, 2004, 143, 44; Blanc, *Histoire*, 35.

<sup>446</sup> Action Strategy, 34.

<sup>447</sup> The dispersion of other parks and protected zones indicates that installing national parks was also attempted in other politically relevant regions such as Gambella. A deeper study on the politics of all Ethiopian national parks and protected zones would be desirable.

The “territorialised identity”<sup>448</sup> of the highland communities in Ethiopia, and their system of land tenure that relied more on a concept of relationship and hierarchy than legally fixed property rights, made the installation of a national park as government property especially difficult in the highlands. At the same time, in the light of centralisation efforts, the installation of government controlled protected zones or even the legal ability to seize the property of the park in favour of the state, presented a highly interesting tool of governance and imperial expansion for Haile Selassie I. This also explains Haile Selassie I’s welcoming of a particularly colonial-minded natural conservation expertise and approach, such as the former British-Kenyan game-warden John Blower and the UNESCO mission of Julian Huxley et al. of 1963. Their recommendations supported an institutionalisation of natural and wildlife conservation, and the selection of regions for conservation that could most strongly represent the symbolic power of the state over the various categories of natural realms.<sup>449</sup>

When in 1969 the Simien National Park was officially installed as one of the first Ethiopian national parks, more than 500,000 people inhabiting the area were rendered a human interference threatening the existence of the park, as *per* the definition, no human settlement could take place in a national park.<sup>450</sup> In the following years, the WWF park wardens, IUCN and UNESCO experts undertook several attempts to balance out conservation requirements with a fair resettlement politics. The situation took a drastic turn in 1978 when the Ethiopian military destroyed several villages and forcefully expelled over 1200 people from the park.<sup>451</sup> Under the Derg government, the territory of the Simien National Park, situated at the northern edge of central Tigray, was a battleground in the fight between the Ethiopian army and the forces of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF). The TPLF managed to hold control over the territory of the park in the process of the ongoing civil war, but were not unaware of the international interest in the park. In 1984, the TPLF Information Office in London sent an unsolicited letter to the Horn of Africa and Aden Council and to IUCN “to alleviate the worry of the [IUCN]” and stated:

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<sup>448</sup> Tronvoll, *War*, 32.

<sup>449</sup> Huxley et al., “The Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Ethiopia,” 29; Blower, “Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks,” 17-19.

<sup>450</sup> Blower, “Ethiopia - Wildlife Conservation and National Parks,” 10, 11.

<sup>451</sup> Blanc, *Histoire*, 69.

The TPLF, as you know, is fighting for the right of self-determination for the peoples of Tigray, who, together with other peoples of Ethiopia have been denied basic human rights. The TPLF's policy with regards to conservation is simple, clear and unequivocal and states that the people have the responsibility to look after their natural resources, both plants and animals, land and water. As a result, no trees are felled or animals hunted without explicit permission from the people's own local administration. It is perhaps useful for the Union to be aware that local administration is in the hands of popularly elected councils in Tigray unlike the case with the Military dictatorship in the so-called socialist Ethiopia.<sup>452</sup>

### **Heritage and territorial conflicts in the Horn of Africa**

The claim to power of the central Ethiopian government of the pre- and post-revolutionary period was not only contested internally, but more critically in the direct regional surroundings. Ethiopia's territorial demands were legitimised, from the official Ethiopian viewpoint, by the historical tradition that was claimed as national history. Heritage and the establishment of historic claims formed part of a crucial political strategy, also in regards to the conflicts at the disputed margins of the "Greater Ethiopian" state territory.

International relations were an external factor in the formation of an Ethiopian national state after the end of the Italian occupation in 1941. The recognition and validation of Ethiopian state boundaries by other state powers was a crucial result of diplomatic efforts, and in a time that notably fostered the principle of building the international system as one between sovereign governments, this helped greatly to establish the central government's power over Ethiopian territory.<sup>453</sup>

Ethiopia was in the middle of several conflicts in the Horn of Africa. As a legacy of arbitrarily drawn colonial borders, the Horn of Africa, until today, is one of the most conflict-ridden regions of the world, and borders and borderlands, questions of nationalism and identities, and land claims/cross-border movements, are at the centre of these conflicts. Ethiopia's disputed south-eastern border with Somalia was the cause of the particularly violent Ogaden War in 1977, which prompted international involvement and, although ending in 1978, did not immediately succeed in establishing a peaceful situation in the Ogaden region, which was still claimed by Somalia until 1980. In the north of Ethiopia, the conflict with Eritrea had been brooding ever since the annexation of the former

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<sup>452</sup> Letter from Girmay Asfaw to Louis Fitzgibbon, 23.5.1984 in UNESCO 502.7 A 101 WHC (63), pt. ii.

<sup>453</sup> Clapham, "Controlling," 11.

federal state of Eritrea into the Ethiopian empire, and throughout the entire period of the Derg regime until final liberation and Eritrean independence in 1990. These two further external conflicts, especially the latter one, further fuelled the internal ethno-liberation movements and their provocation of armed conflict, putting many regions of Ethiopia into the daily shadow of armed conflict for many decades.<sup>454</sup>

Ethiopia's claim to a regional hegemonic position was strongly tied to the historic narratives of a "Greater Ethiopia" and instrumentalised to justify the denunciation of federalism, nationalist movements, and the territorial claims of Somalia. Thus, the territorial conflicts and the necessary foreign regional positioning of Ethiopia also perpetuated the establishment of narratives. The image of Ethiopia, constructed with the aid of an internationally acclaimed national heritage, also has to be interpreted in this context. The "Greater Ethiopia" maps shown above illustrate this image construction, as they simply extended, as if naturally, over disputed territories. An outline-map, including Eritrea and the Ogaden as part of "Greater Ethiopia", published during these conflicts, certainly had an impact beyond the tourism marketing sphere.

There is another aspect that suggests that for Haile Selassie I establishing heritage was part of a larger political strategy to sustain the state centralisation and consolidation process. International relations were a highly relevant factor in the formation of the Ethiopian national state. The recognition and validation of Ethiopian state boundaries by the bigger international state powers, during a period where the international system was being built as a system between sovereign national governments, greatly helped to establish the central government's power and governance over the Ethiopian territory.

While the primary objective for the Ethiopian government in seeking out an alliance with the USA after 1941 was certainly to gain military backing against British dominance in the neighbouring territories of Eritrea and Somalia (a US-operated communications air base was installed in Kagnew), the groundwork for a US mapping mission was laid in the same agreement and was vital for establishing national park boundaries and cultural heritage sites. The additional benefit of mapping a "Greater Ethiopia" certainly formed part of the reasoning behind the pursuit of this kind of collaboration.<sup>455</sup>

Deeply entrenched in Cold War politics, strategic cooperation with both the US and the USSR allowed the Derg regime to eventually utilise the military and intelligence support of both sides, and profit from the importance of the region to the larger powers' own military strategy and their need for a politically stable Horn of Africa. When it was prudent to

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<sup>454</sup> Dereje Feyissa and Markus Virgil Hoehne, "State Borders & Borderlands as Resources: An Analytical Framework," in *Borders and Borderlands as Resources in the Horn of Africa*, ed. Dereje Feyissa and Markus Virgil Hoehne, Eastern Africa (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010), 4-6.

<sup>455</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 221; Bahru Zewde, *The Quest for Socialist Utopia*, 43.



fully commit to a Soviet alliance in favour of one with the US, Ethiopia was able to “re-establish itself as the regionally dominant state, and to restore a stable alliance pattern in collaboration with the Soviet Union as the new regionally dominant superpower.”<sup>456</sup> Rather than being seen as pawns for the superpowers in the Cold War, it seems appropriate to interpret the alliance politics of Ethiopia in the 70s and 80s as very strategically and tactically orchestrated, and somewhat balanced. Ethiopia’s diplomatic efforts and international relations were guided by weighing the acute military conflicts, the possibility of acquiring weapons, and disaster and famine relief needs, against infrastructural developmental needs. These approaches are embedded in the representative use of heritage, which inherently symbolised the “Greater Ethiopia” claim as well as national unity.

### **4.3 External politicisation of heritage: representing and advertising the nation**

The high value of heritage as a political asset was not only relevant on an internal level and in regional conflicts, but also had a prominent role in foreign policy and diplomacy. The Ethiopian government aimed to maintain and expand the image of a strong country in order to stabilise political power and enable foreign investment. The “Great Tradition” narrative, in particular the aspect which declared Ethiopia to be the most advanced civilisation in Africa, played a role beyond the regional position of Ethiopia. Similarly, the narrative of having resisted colonial occupation was firmly woven into the larger narrative of the “Great Tradition”, of a strong, continuous and ancient empire which was naturally was the leader of African states and a key partner for the United Nations and the Northern Atlantic countries. In the context of the Pan-African movement during the 1960s, this image became especially relevant, and promoting it formed a central element in Haile Selassie I’s foreign policy. After the revolution and as a result of the decline of the Pan-African idea, Ethiopia aimed to position itself instead as the leader of the new, free, socialist African nations, leading the struggle against imperialism and capitalism and towards equality and development. In both political systems, the use of heritage imagery to create a state iconography was important and strategically employed, most visibly in relation to development efforts. Publications containing images of heritage and modern achievements promoted Ethiopia to foreign investors, be they governments, international donor organisations or the private economy. The international recognition of Ethiopian heritage as World Heritage helped establish and support this image production. The

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<sup>456</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 227.

World Heritage sites of northern Ethiopia, in particular the cultural sites, were the most important heritage symbols affiliated with the “Great Tradition” of Ethiopia. The popularity of these sites, in terms of research and tourism interest alike, turned their imagery into an iconography that would form the visual core of internal and external politicisation.

### **Establishing an image of Ethiopia as Africa’s leading country during the 1960s and 1970s**

In order to achieve greater political and economic strength, Haile Selassie I placed a special emphasis on international relations in his politics. His international political strategy was two-fold and combined a re-positioning of Ethiopia within the African continent and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), as well as on the international diplomatic stage of the UN. Ethiopian heritage, more specifically the “Great Tradition” narrative and images of the classic monumental cultural heritage sites, was employed in rhetoric and visual representation to support and promote a specific political strategy to an international audience of politicians and diplomats.

Traditionally, the Ethiopian elites had a distinct notion of not belonging, culturally speaking, to Africa, and did not consider themselves as African. During the first decades of the twentieth century, the larger part of Ethiopian society had cultivated an atmosphere of a “splendid isolation”,<sup>457</sup> politically as well as culturally.<sup>458</sup> In the process of the colonisation of almost the entire African continent, political relations had been re-routed to the European metropolises of the colonial empires. Intellectual orientation, as a consequence, shifted towards Europe as well. Existing traditional racist prejudices towards the supposedly more negroid population of the rest of Africa resonated with popular Western concepts of African inferiority. In education and historiography, any African affiliation was neglected and Ethiopian history was instead embedded in the history of Western, Eurocentric civilisation, the Ethiopian tradition viewed as a unique and independent development, sharing roots with Western civilisations in ancient empires, scripture and Christianity.<sup>459</sup>

Haile Selassie’s achievement of succeeding against the Italian occupation, without undergoing a longer existence as a colony, had turned Ethiopia into a symbol for the indepen-

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<sup>457</sup> Perham, *Government*, xlix.

<sup>458</sup> Although often argued as a naturally given due to the geographical isolation of Ethiopia, research suggests that the idea of geographical isolation is a construct of the late nineteenth century, to promote the orientation towards Europe and provide legitimisation for the consolidation of the Ethiopian empire under Menelik II, Mesay Kebede, *Radicalism and Cultural Dislocation in Ethiopia, 1960-1974*, 194, 63.

<sup>459</sup> Balsvik, *Students*, 205, 206; Perham, *Government*, xlvii, xlviii.

struggles of other African countries. Political leaders of nationalist movements referred to Haile Selassie I's Ethiopia as an important role model for resistance against colonial oppression, and many of them also expressed their respect for "the one great African kingdom which, except for a single tragic interlude which only enhanced his claim, had stood through two millenia [sic] and had shone, at least to the intelligentsia, as a beacon of independence and African civilization [sic] to the rest of a continent held in subjection to Europe."<sup>460</sup> This resonated well with Ethiopian intellectual elites and the "pride in their own history and cultural heritage which had not been rendered inferior by a prolonged European colonial presence"<sup>461</sup> deeply ingrained in their mindset. During the 1950s and 1960s, the glorification of Ethiopian history by African nationalist movements shifted the Ethiopian self-perception of not belonging to Africa.<sup>462</sup>

At the same time, Ethiopian political efforts started to open up and to orientate towards the African continent. The Ethiopian political position claimed superiority in the process of the re-formation of the African continent as a political entity through reference to a particular Ethiopian national heritage. Haile Selassie I strategically engaged in the role of African Leader awarded to him by the leaders of national liberation movements of African states, and used this role to strengthen his political power. He directed, at least in an African context, his external politics towards an understanding "that the Ethiopian people belong to the coloured nations of Africa" and Ethiopia was "a connecting link between Africa and Europe."<sup>463</sup> Early on, he granted leaders of independence movements the privilege of his receiving them as official state guests, and provided support to political refugees. During the peak of decolonisation from around 1960, the Pan-African idea had experienced a decisive shift from a discourse largely located in the African diaspora to an applied movement on the ground that became ever more prominent and relevant as a political concept.<sup>464</sup> The foundation of the OAU seemed to materialise this vision of a continental unity that would aid in overcoming the damages caused by colonial rule and develop competitive strength on an international level.<sup>465</sup> Yet the process of African unification was challenged by a political division between more radical democratic demands and

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<sup>460</sup> Perham, *Government*, xlix.

<sup>461</sup> Balsvik, *Students*, 209.

<sup>462</sup> Ibid., 206, 207; Perham, *Government*, I, li.

<sup>463</sup> Mission report, no date, in: UNESCO 008 (63) MP 03.

<sup>464</sup> Also the emergence of the Rastafari movement in connection with the prophetic statements of Marcus Garvey's *black nationalism* was based on a version of the „Greater Ethiopia“ image: the image of „Ethiopia as a sacred sovereign“, Giulia Bonacci, "From Pan-Africanism to Rastafari: African American and Caribbean 'Returns' to Ethiopia," in *Understanding Contemporary Ethiopia: Monarchy, Revolution and the Legacy of Meles Zenawi*, ed. Gérard Prunier and Éloi Ficquet (London: Hurst & Company, 2015), 151.

<sup>465</sup> Andreas Eckert, "Bringing the 'Black Atlantic' into Global History: The Project of Pan-Africanism," in *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s-1930*, ed. Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 240, 242; Peter O. Esedebe, *Pan-Africanism: The Idea and Movement 1776 - 1963* (Washington, D.C.: Howard Univ. Pr., 1982), ix; Asfa-Wossen Asserate, *Der letzte Kaiser von Afrika: Triumph und Tragödie des Haile Selassie* (Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 2014), 291-99.

more conservative positions, resulting in the formation of different groups in pursuit of African unity. The interest of the Ethiopian government was thought to be best served by supporting the maintenance of national sovereignty and the existing colonial boundaries within the continent. Through diplomatic efforts, Haile Selassie I eventually secured a position in which the Ethiopian approach would represent the interest of the majority of the newly independent African states, overruling ideas of a continental integration, a continental government and any redrawing of boundaries.<sup>466</sup> Haile Selassie I's strategy included the installation of the headquarters of the OAU in Addis Ababa, officially promoting Ethiopia, and more specifically the capital, Addis Ababa, as a capital of inter-African diplomacy.<sup>467</sup>

The installation of the OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa was part of a larger strategy by the Ethiopian Government to establish Addis Ababa as a major location for African and international political conferences, and as a diplomatic hub. The Ethiopian government was able to provide a sufficiently independent infrastructure, including conference and office buildings, high-end hotels and the well-connected services of EAL.<sup>468</sup> Furthermore, the image of Ethiopia as an African leader and the only stable African country played to the advantage of Haile Selassie I, who acted as spokesman for Africa on the international stage and managed in 1958 to secure Addis Ababa as the site for UNECA. UNECA, as well as several other UN agencies, could be conveniently housed in the newly built Africa Hall, a modern, representative building, provided at the cost of the Ethiopian government.<sup>469</sup> Events such as the hosting of the UNESCO conference on education in African states in Addis 1961, demonstrated the capacities that the Ethiopian Government claimed for the country, and that others readily projected onto it.<sup>470</sup> In all these efforts, the representation of Ethiopia as a strong country on the diplomatic and the international stage was connected to the narrative of the "Great Tradition", enriched by the defeat of colonial rule as a further prove of Ethiopian "Greatness".

Despite the fact that Haile Selassie I's plea to the League of Nations for support against the Italian occupation had remained unsuccessful, cultivating contacts close to the evolving landscape of international organisations, in particular the UN, had been an important aspect of Ethiopian diplomacy and foreign politics. By the time that the international

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<sup>466</sup> Ethiopia had a keen interest in opposing the strongest opponent of withdrawal, Somalia, as this would have cost Ethiopia some territory in the south, which, while populated mostly by Somalis, did have the prospect of oil reserves. Dereje Feyissa and Hoehne, "Borders," 4, 5; Markakis, *Resource*, 54.

<sup>467</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 222.

<sup>468</sup> One of the revolution's main accusations was that Haile Selassie spent too much money on this kind of representation and foreign relations in general,

<sup>469</sup> See ch. 2; R.K.P.P., "The Economic Commission for Africa," *Ethiopia Observer* VII, no. 2 (1963): 99.

<sup>470</sup> unesdoc, Conference of African states on the development of education in Africa, Addis Ababa, 15-25 May, 1961, final report, v.

organisations entered the African continents with their operations, Ethiopia was able to look back at a history of good personal relationships with many of the agencies, and was therefore in a somewhat advantageous position.<sup>471</sup>

This strong African and international standing strengthened Ethiopian internal political stability and the central government's power as well. Haile Selassie I had approached the presence of foreigners in Ethiopia in general as a strategic element in both his national and foreign policy scheme, in order to strengthen his internal political position.<sup>472</sup> Collaborating with foreign expertise and establishing a close-knit relationship with the community of foreigners was supposed to silence development plans being proposed by members of the constitutional assembly in Ethiopia and to demonstrate his status and power. In a similar manner, Haile Selassie I used the international organisations to obtain financial and expert assistance for Ethiopia, a practice that was continued after the revolution.<sup>473</sup>

Requesting financial and technical assistance to foster economic development was an obvious incentive for Ethiopia to join the UN system. Even though international relations played a major role in both pre- and post-revolution Ethiopian politics in general, the utilisation of international organisations as external resources for domestic political programmes made the international visual and rhetorical representation of Ethiopia an especially relevant factor. External aid had a strategically important place in Ethiopian state development, and membership in international organisations opened up new possibilities to expand this strategy.<sup>474</sup> The numerous requests which Ethiopia submitted to UNESCO alone illustrate how the Ethiopian government agencies readily slotted UNESCO's programmes into existing or newly created vacant places in the administration which domestic resources couldn't sufficiently cover.<sup>475</sup> The common need of both incoming international experts and the emerging Ethiopian bureaucracy was the ability to expand governance to enable their operations. This explains why, for example, mapping was conducted so extensively during the 1960s. Land-use planning and regulation, though crucial, were underrepresented as institutional tasks and made it difficult to develop strategies for population control, disaster management and for the exploitation of natural resources.<sup>476</sup> Relations with UNESCO and the implementation of the World Heritage

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<sup>471</sup> Office of the Resident Representative of the UNDP, ed., *The United Nations in Ethiopia 1951-1966: An Account of Technical Assistance and Pre-Investment Activities Carried out by the United Nations and Its Specialized Agencies at the Request of the Ethiopian Government* (Addis Ababa: Berhanenna Selam Printing Press, 1966), 5-7.

<sup>472</sup> Viveca Halldin Norberg, *Swedes in Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, 1924-1952: a study in early development co-operation* (Stockholm: Almqvist och Wiksell, 1977).

<sup>473</sup> Perham, *Government*, I.

<sup>474</sup> Clapham, *Transformation*, 220, 221.

<sup>475</sup> See ch. 2.

<sup>476</sup> Mesfin W. Mariam, "Imperial".

Convention and other programmes have to be understood as part of a strategy to implement foreign resources on behalf of the government.

### **Images of heritage as an iconography of Ethiopia's success**

Heritage-making and the symbolic use of heritage to represent Ethiopia as a strong country played a crucial role for this dimension of international relations. Visual representations of a strong Ethiopia, embarking into modernity on the foundations of its “Great Tradition”, were used to create and promote an image of Ethiopia of international reach and impact. During the period of establishing an Ethiopian national identity on the international stage in the 1960s, the use of images of heritage was widespread and frequent. In line with Haile Selassie I's extensive use of media to create an iconography and image-cult of his leadership, likewise the selected visual representation of heritage as national monuments turned into an iconography in its own right.<sup>477</sup>

When Ethiopia intensified its outreach for technical assistance and development funds, beginning with the first Ethiopian development plan in 1959, the Ethiopian government started to produce publications to present and advertise Ethiopia to the international community as an investment opportunity. In this context, Ethiopian history, heritage sites and monuments gained relevance as national brand icons, and were used to illustrate and symbolise Ethiopia's continuity as a form of proof of the high potential there for success and development.

In the book *Economic Progress of Ethiopia* from 1955, for example, published by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, heritage functions as a form of social capital that provides Ethiopia with the ability to validate itself and claim value in international relations. The book was “intended as an outline of some aspects of the massive progress<sup>478</sup> [...] during the twenty-five years of the inspired reign of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I” and was essentially a collection of short articles describing the sectoral development of financial, agricultural, health, education and communication affairs in Ethiopia between ca. 1925 and 1950, as well as containing more than eighty pages of detailed statistics regarding these matters. No mention of history or the “Great Tradition” is made anywhere in the book, yet, on the cover, the title is embossed in gold, together with a drawing of the large Aksum Obelisk. On the first page, the same obelisk is portrayed as a black-and-white drawing, with the surrounding scenery in Aksum, including other monuments, trees and people.

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<sup>477</sup> Jeylan Wolyie Hussein, “The Subtle Connection between the Greater Ethiopia Image, the Ideology of Blaming and Silencing, and the Cult of Emperor Haile Selassie,” *The Australasian Review of African Studies The Australasian Review of African Studies* 27, no. 1 (2005): 63, 64; John Gartley, “Control of Media and Concept of Image by Haile Selassie I,” in *Études éthiopiennes: Actes de la Xe conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24-28 août 1988*, ed. Claude Lepage, vol. 1 (Paris: Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 1994), 653, 653.

<sup>478</sup> Ethiopia, ed., *Economic Progress of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa, 1955), vii.

Another example is the book *Image of Ethiopia*, published in 1962 by the Ministry of Information.<sup>479</sup> Slightly confusingly, it pairs a chapter of text on the history of the country from 1890 onwards with images of much older heritage sites. This book illustrates the enduring relevance and role of monumental heritage sites in the government's self-presentation and self-perception, and reveals the crafting of a ruling historical narrative.

Iconic images of heritage sites were linked with materials aimed at presenting the economic progress of the country, like in the book from the Ministry of Information from 1967, *Patterns of Progress - Ethiopia - Past and Present*.<sup>480</sup> Starting with a biographical overview of Haile Selassie I's life and an anchoring of Ethiopian history in antiquity, the modern government and its achievements in various sectors are then presented, illustrated with images of modern machinery, spotless urban scenes of modern Addis Ababa and neatly dressed people.

The images in these government publications were further disseminated through the promotion of tourism and experienced an extremely successful reception on an international level from the 1960s on.<sup>481</sup> International publications like coffee table books, travel guides and photo-essays verified reciprocally the image of Ethiopia as Africa's only empire. The selection of images and topics centred around the narrative of the monumental remains of an advanced civilisation, the Queen of Shebamyth and the endurance of early Christian culture in an isolated location and unique natural features. This international coverage helped the promotion of Ethiopia through images of national heritage gain significant momentum.

Heritage-making in Ethiopia was a state affair, and consequently the image production was controlled just as much as the foreign research. Naturally, censorship applied to all publications and press produced and published in Ethiopia. Haile Selassie I's and Mengistu's personal support of projects involving the location of cultural heritage, and the book projects resulting from it, illustrates the decided importance of heritage-making and the monopolisation of the related image and knowledge-production in the Ethiopian political landscape. The books of Irmgard Bidder on Lalibela or Georg Gerster on the stone churches, for example, not only make ample reference to the generous support and permission of Haile Selassie I, but both books also include a personal forward by the emperor, as well as his portrait. In publications addressed to a broader Western audience, a foreword

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<sup>479</sup> Ministry of Information, ed., *Image of Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Artistic Press, 1962).

<sup>480</sup> Ministry of Information, *Ethiopia, Past and Present*.

<sup>481</sup> See also ch. 5.

by Haile Selassie I was mandatory for an authorisation for publication by the Ethiopian government. When the UWAS Album on Ethiopian manuscript paintings was reaching its final production stages, the publisher was obliged to include a portrait and forward of the emperor in order to receive the final permission for publication.<sup>482</sup>

While the conservation of heritage was not at the forefront of serious undertakings of the socialist regime, the use of heritage as representative tool to produce and hold up Ethiopia's image internationally was still relevant. The government commissioned Western journalists, scholars and other experts to produce coffee table books, highlighting Ethiopian heritage. Although these books did not usually include government promotion directly or explicitly, the circulation of images of historical and natural wonders nevertheless promoted the country in a positive way and therefore strengthened the government, particularly given the restricted access policy of the government to the heritage sites in the north, the places of main interest to foreigners.<sup>483</sup>

This control of image and knowledge-production ensured that images of Ethiopian heritage would only circulate in a tightly determined manner and in the service of building-up an international Ethiopian national identity. In the book *Churches in Rock* by Georg Gerster, Haile Selassie I's words were:

Ethiopia is proud of its culture, which is without interruption from the fourth century AD to today. This is owed to the Christian faith, which victoriously withheld all influences and disturbances throughout the times and remained firmly anchored in Ethiopian culture. [...] currently foreign researchers from various countries, together with the United Nations and the *Institute*, are working towards conserving this heritage and finding out as much as possible about the creators of these monuments and their lives [sic].<sup>484</sup>

## 4.4 Ethiopian World Heritage in the socio-political context of 1960-1980

Responding to the first call for nominations for the World Heritage site, Ethiopia submitted a selection that represented the "Great Tradition". When looking at all eleven of Ethiopia's submissions in 1978, and not only at the seven nominations that were successful in

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<sup>482</sup> Several letters concerning the finalising of the book production, in: UNESCO 7 UWAS (63).

<sup>483</sup> Hancock, *Sign*, 8, 9; Hancock explicitly refers to the following book as a result of such a commission: Graham Hancock, Richard Pankhurst, and Duncan Willetts, *Under Ethiopian Skies* (London: Ed. HL, 1983).

<sup>484</sup> Georg Gerster, *Churches in Rock: Early Christian Art in Ethiopia* (London: Phaidon, 1970), 1.



achieving World Heritage status, among them were three national parks. It is these parks in particular that reflect the strategic use of heritage-making and the dominance of the “Greater Ethiopia” image. The international acknowledgement acquired by achieving World Heritage status was supposed to sanction the establishment of large territories of government property in the name of natural conservation.<sup>485</sup> The submission is exemplary for the political role of heritage-making in Ethiopia in the years leading up to 1978. The ancient monumental sites—Aksum, Gondar and Lalibela—were major sites affiliated with the narrative of the ancient and medieval Ethiopian empire as well as with the Christian tradition. The high number of nominated sites are proof of a particularly vivid and pro-active engagement with heritage-making in Ethiopia during the 1970s. In a combined effort, the Ethiopian government agencies for cultural heritage and wildlife conservation had assembled a selection of sites that illustrates how the conservation efforts were targeted at sites that would integrate well with the overall goal of delivering a spatial and visual representation of Ethiopian national identity. The most famous of the cultural heritage sites representing the “Great Tradition” narrative to an interested foreign audience were the Lalibela churches, the medieval castles in Gondar and the antique remnants in Aksum. These sites became most prominent as they were already those sites with the best tourist infrastructure in place, ensuring they were prioritised in the planning.<sup>486</sup>

The case of the Muslim city of Harar, which was among the sites nominated in 1978, demonstrates the relevance of political influence over heritage-making, as the urban, Muslim heritage was not fully adaptable into the official narrative of Ethiopian history, despite being critically acclaimed internationally. In Harar, both the government and the international experts, were faced with a strong local engagement in the heritage-making process, causing the necessary conservation works in Harar to be forestalled. In 1979, the Ethiopian Ministry of Culture, together with the Chief Technical Advisor of ETH/74/14, undertook a mission to Harar to display and educate on the positive effects and intentions of NGO and International Organisation conservation efforts. The aim of this mission was to gain support for the cause of heritage conservation under the ministry’s authority, but also to familiarise people with the official terms and concepts, such as heritage, cultural heritage, and international assistance. In Harar, the participants had to acknowledge a vivid and engaged culture of heritage-making.

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<sup>485</sup> Blanc, *Histoire*, 81–83.

<sup>486</sup> Note on ETH/74/014 from Patrick Bulenzi, 23.4.1979, in: UNESCO 069:7 (100) A218.

Prior to the mission's arrival in Harar on 26.10.1979, in the afternoon arrangements were made for all planned meetings, discussions, plus a display of the survey and a reorganization of the small museum. The latter partly improved by items borrowed from citizens in the town. [...] On the exhibition was shown the survey—some 80 maps filled-in with colour indication in accordance with observation and the valid legend—a montage of photos with the theme: “A TOWN/its people/their places/their houses/ITS DECAY”, a historical outline on Harar prepared by the Elders of the town and a remarkable study on the traditional houses, the technique and materials, with samples and indications where to be found— this study was prepared by an Hararian of the age above 85 years. The museal part covered old manuscripts, weapons, dresses, household articles etc.<sup>487</sup>

Although the members of the mission positively approved the heritage activities in Harar, they were unable to negotiate a concept with the authorities in Harar relating to how to integrate a masterplan for the conservation of Harar into the existing programmes of the Ministry. Only in 1994 did Harar become a World Heritage site, because after 1991 the government was then open to a more community-based approach to conservation. The relevance of World Heritage status for national heritage sites in Ethiopia shows that, from the beginning, the impact of World Heritage appeared to have manifold effects and ostensibly extended beyond conservation. National heritage, as part of the question of national identity, became more ideologically charged in a climate of fierce civil war and internal struggles. In the contested Ethiopian setting, the social implications of the question of national heritage and identity gave particular relevance to the role of establishing official national heritage. The involvement of an international organisation, UNESCO, inevitably tied international conservation efforts to national conflicts and necessitated a positioning of the international experts and policy implementation, voluntarily and involuntarily. Foreign experts contributed to the politicisation of heritage, since to deal with heritage the acquisition of a permit was mandatory. Any attempt of researchers or foreign journalists to remain neutral or unpolitical as regards heritage would not have been possible, both in the imperial and socialist periods.

The attention from international researchers and conservators made the Ethiopian heritage sites in question acquire significant value as a resource. However, when looking at the impact of the internal and external politicisation of heritage, as well as the impact that establishing heritage had on the ground, at the local level of the direct surroundings of the

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<sup>487</sup> Letter from E. Olsen to Tesfaye Shewaye, 14.11. 1979, in: UNESCO, UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ix.

heritage sites, threats and opportunities alike arose for the population. While according to official procedure local knowledge was largely non-existent, heritage-making in Ethiopia, and in particular the making of World Heritage there, relied on locals acting as brokers and mediators of relevant knowledge. This micro-level of heritage-making suggests a degree of agency within the local communities that reflects a more multifaceted interpretation of the socio-political context of heritage-making.

In Ethiopia, the impact on the local population of heritage-making with a national and international scope was particularly strong in the World Heritage sites that had already formed part of the “Historic Route”. The international attention and involvement brought threats and opportunities for the local population.

Establishing the Simien Mountains as a national heritage site presented a threat to the larger part of the local population. All official actors involved, in particular the international experts, unanimously deemed it necessary to remove, if necessary with force, the people living within the boundaries of the park. In the correspondence between the international experts, the EWCO, UNESCO and IUCN, the population is referred to as a “problem”, endangering the integrity of the national park.<sup>488</sup> International experts contributed with their work to the politicisation of heritage sites. Simien was already, in the early evaluations of international experts, considered one of the most endangered conservation areas because of poaching and the “encroaching cultivation” of the local population.<sup>489</sup>

For the several thousand inhabitants in the area, conservation activities resulted in several attempts at forced resettlement. In addition, the restrictive ban on hunting, pasturage and agriculture in the park in effect withdrew the main means of livelihood from the region. From the first moment of international involvement, when the IUCN/FAO special project first identified the Simien Mountains as a potential national park, these restrictions were part and parcel of the concept for the park.<sup>490</sup>

Despite these demands expressed in reports and similar evaluation documents, and their far-reaching and sometimes violent repercussions, the experts involved in monitoring the park on the ground were concerned about the social impact of the restrictions resulting from the establishment of the national park. Proposals for resettlement schemes that would include education opportunities, or proposals for a change of the delineation of the park boundaries to exclude a maximum number of inhabitants, were among those sug-

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<sup>488</sup> See the correspondence in the nomination dossier in: UNESCO 502.7 A 101 WHC (63), pt. ii, the reports of Charles Rosetti and Ermias Bekele and the handwritten comments attached to them, in UNESCO CLT/WHC/NOM 11.

<sup>489</sup> Grimwood, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources,” 6.

<sup>490</sup> Blanc, “Violence,” 164.

gested by several experts.<sup>491</sup> The Swiss experts involved in the conservation of the park and the World Heritage Nomination process during the 1970s, geographer Hans Hurni and biologist Bernhard Nievergelt, initiated the Swiss-based, private Pro-Simien foundation in order to install a boarding house in Debark, the major town of the Simien region, to enable the children of the local park wardens to visit the school in Debark.

There were some positive aspects for the local population resulting from the process of heritage-making, as local actors were important for heritage-making as knowledge and information brokers. On location in the natural as well as cultural heritage sites, the local population served as brokers between map and territory, navigating researchers, foreign experts, and tourists through the surroundings. In this regard, the foreign interest, as well as national prioritisation, presented an opportunity for the local population—they worked as guides and could trade their extensive knowledge of the oral history tradition surrounding the sites as valuable information to the foreigners. Graham Hancock, in his popular science book on searching for the Ark of the Covenant in the late 1980s wrote that to him, it was obvious that “everyone in Aksum knows” the history of the sites and he claimed his work was reliant to a crucial extent on the strong local oral tradition.<sup>492</sup>

While in a more general sense everyone in Tigray benefitted from an affiliation with what was declared as the most important national heritage site, the inhabitants of the towns in Lalibela, Aksum and Gondar particularly, understood the possibility of making themselves heard, or pursuing their particular goals, and how they might connect directly from their local level to the international level while circumventing the national government. Connecting to the foreign experts and their interest, be it as some kind of service or as a knowledge provider, or by assisting in negotiations to achieve permits from the local clergy, would strengthen their own position and agenda, especially in the years after 1974. For example, G. Blatch, British businessman and hobby-archaeologist, who visited Axum for the first time in 1967, engaged in personal correspondence with some of the local people who had assisted him during his stay. From letters like that from H.,<sup>493</sup> a high-school student, it is evident that he traded for the local’s knowledge of antiquities by offering a small donation towards his staying in school. H.’s letters also reveal a perception of the foreign visitor’s interest as a connection and resource out of the devastating political and existential state of living. H. insisted that writing those letters, in which he informed

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<sup>491</sup> Report Rosetti, Report Bekele in, UNESCO WHC/NOM/11. Hans Hurni explained this to me in more detail during the interview I held with him, and how it resulted in the most recent re-drawing of boundaries for the park.

<sup>492</sup> Hancock, *Sign*, 503–4.

<sup>493</sup> For safety concerns, he explained that H. never stated his full name, as he reported about the situation in the area and suspected all mail to be read before shipped abroad.

Blatch about the situation in Tigray regarding the accessibility to the rock churches and other sites, put his life in danger in times of political unrest in Tigray.<sup>494</sup>

These letters provide us a small and personal insight, and they help to illuminate the role of the particular antiquities of international interest. In this regard, maintaining and establishing the sites as international heritage was a question of securing income, at least for parts of the local population. On the contrary, over certain periods, the central government prioritised control and security of the area above foreign research of the antiquities, especially in Tigray. While the continued decay or inappropriate measures of conservation in use did directly threaten the value of the resources at the micro-economic level, it did not immediately have an effect on their value at the political and the macro-economic level.

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<sup>494</sup> Tigray Correspondence, SOAS, Blatch papers, file 15.

## **5. The missing link to success and funding for international conservation: tourism for development in Ethiopia and other countries**

The story of how Ethiopian national heritage became World Heritage is as much an economic one as it is a cultural one. In Ethiopia, the conservation of monuments and national parks was both development practice and heritage-making at the same time within the context of tourism development.

Tourism became increasingly relevant and prominent from the 1950s onwards. Cultural tourism, stimulated by the presence of internationally-acknowledged monuments and wildlife was seen by many as a major source of potential revenue for developing countries, especially those in East Africa. According to this belief, monuments and wildlife presented some of the few native resources available to these countries. Economic studies assessed the situation and recommended tourism as among the most important foreign currency earning sectors in the 1960s. UNESCO played a key role in unlocking that possibility by creating policies and promoting and financially enabling conservation. Consequently, the establishment and conservation of cultural and natural heritage became more prominent in the political agendas of many “developing countries” from the 1960s onwards. Driven largely by the promise of economic development through tourism, relevant policies were introduced and financial resources were allocated so as to establish conservation on an institutional level.

The funding of both small and large-scale conservation activities was a growing topic of concern that developed alongside the concept of universal heritage. Tourism connected heritage sites to economic development and was considered a focal point by conservators. They argued that conservation would serve development, leading them to push for funding for conservation activities. In the context of rising numbers of tourists, and the first UN Development Decade, UNESCO positioned itself at the intersection of these two fields in promoting and undertaking technical assistance for the conservation of heritage sites as tourist destinations. UNESCO started rolling out technical missions concerned with the development of tourism-masterplans. These missions were carried out by conservation experts in a number of countries, but Ethiopia received the largest number. Activities to promote cultural and natural sites in Ethiopia as tourist destinations started from the late 1950s, when EAL and the government-run Ethiopian Tourism Organisation began large scale promotional activities, including slogans and the extensive production of advertisements, guidebooks and postcards. Ethiopian development planning placed

great hopes in the development of the tourism sector, which promised high revenue at a fraction of the cost. Ethiopian cultural and natural heritage was central to tourism development efforts. Selected heritage sites along the “Historic Route” were prioritised for conservation in order to strengthen the destination value of Ethiopia. Tourism promotion fostered the establishment of an image of Ethiopia and an iconography of selected Ethiopian heritage sites that greatly aided the integration of Ethiopian heritage sites in the World Heritage Programme. The touristic image of Ethiopia was not only targeted at a Western market, but also developed with the help of foreign experts, and further contributed to an image of Ethiopian heritage that was essentially Western.

## 5.1 Tourism for development

Tourism appeared early on as an issue at the highest international levels and was linked with economic development. The obvious international economic dimension and impact of tourism called for a positioning of the international organisations, according to their idealistic constitutions and missions on the one hand and their claimed expertise on the other.

### Global expansion of tourism in the 1950-1980s

Tourism has its roots in the European, and more particularly British, tradition of the nobility touring other countries as part of their education—the Grand Tour. The emergence of tourism as an industry occurred in the context of the transformation of work-life-organisation that took place with the industrialisation of Western societies. The availability of leisure time was combined with a desire to travel for recreational purposes. Since the 1950s there was a significant rise in tourist numbers worldwide, due to large-scale economic, social and technological changes in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>495</sup> The introduc-

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<sup>495</sup> This outlined distinction of tourism as a decidedly modern, European phenomenon, follows the argumentation of Zuelow's *History of Modern Tourism*. The most important trend in historic tourism research is a broader understanding of the term tourism, suggesting the inclusion of non-Western and pre-modern forms of travel, such as pilgrimage, to arrive at a long-durée perspective of a history of tourism; the study of tourism as a phenomenon spreads across several disciplines, making it impossible “to consider all tourism in a single theoretical scheme”, Dennison Nash, “Tourism as a Form of Imperialism,” in *Hosts and Guests - The Anthropology of Tourism*, ed. Valene L Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc, 2012), 38; Eric G. E. Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism* (London: Palgrave, 2016), 5–12; history, geography, cultural studies, anthropology and economics inform the growing academic discipline of tourism studies, which is today first and foremost taught as an applied science, and started to take shape in the 1950s. See for example the three Routledge Handbooks: Cathy H. C. Hsu, *The Routledge Handbook of Tourism Research* (London: Routledge, 2012); Melanie Smith, *The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Tourism* (London: Routledge, 2013); Julie Wilson, *The Routledge Handbook of Tourism Geographies*, Routledge Handbooks (London: Routledge, 2012). In the following chapter, tourism is concerned only in the more narrow definition of the source material and the contemporary understanding of the 1960s and 1970s.

tion and elaboration of paid holidays since the 1920s made way for the concept of leisure time that could be spent travelling elsewhere. This became feasible for a significantly large number of workers, a contrast to previous times where travelling for recuperation and education had remained a privilege of the upper and middle classes. The ever-growing number of salaried workers that were entitled to paid holiday contributed to the growing volume of travel that had begun to be classified as touristic. The quickly stabilising political situation and the rapid economic growth in Western Europe, Australasia and North America provided the necessary framework for the booming tourism sector— significant levels of available investment eased the expansion of necessary infrastructure and increasing disposable income caused a significant yearly growth. Finally, the technological innovations of motorisation, the expansion of railway and road infrastructure, and the introduction of air travel made mass transportation easier, less time-consuming and affordable<sup>496</sup>.

The numbers of international tourists grew to the point where tourism evolved into a large sector, quickly acquiring importance for many national economies, including tour operators and all parts of the hospitality industry, be they accommodation, food or entertainment. As a result, new international organisations and networks were formed, the most important of these being the International Union of Travel Organisations (IUOTO), established in 1946. IUOTO concerned themselves with issues relating to travel conditions, especially visa and passport regulations, but also joint regional advertising and the definition of standards.

To strengthen its policy-making capacities<sup>497</sup> and following a majority vote owing largely to developing countries, in 1974 the Union was transformed into the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and elevated to the ranks of a UN special agency, excluding the private sector members.<sup>498</sup> The UNWTO, in undertaking more targeted attempts to centralise tourism policies internationally, was behind important globally applicable tourist policies like the 1980 Manila declaration and the 1982 Acapulco Document<sup>499</sup>. It became, like UNESCO, an executing agency of the UNDP, ensuring therefore that, structurally, development had an international dimension.

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<sup>496</sup> Manish Ratti, *History and Geography of Tourism* (New Delhi: Rajat Publ, 2007), 22–24.

<sup>497</sup> Which were non-existent due to the Union's non-governmental status.

<sup>498</sup> N. N., "Creation of the Inter-Governmental World Tourism Organization," *ATR Annals of Tourism Research* 2, no. 5 (1975): 237–45; United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism, *Recommendations on International Travel and Tourism* (Geneva: United Nations, 1964).

<sup>499</sup> Most noteworthy about the Manila declaration and the Acapulco Document is the fact that they explicitly state tourism to be a facilitating factor for a new economic world order; "Manila Declaration on World Tourism," *UNWTO Declarations* 6, no. 4 (October 30, 1980): 1–4, <https://doi.org/10.18111/unwtodeclarations.1980.6.4.1>; United Nations World Tourism Organization, "Acapulco Document," August 1982, <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/unwtodeclarations.1982.8.4.1>.



## Tourism in the first UN Development Decade

The growth of tourism eventually turned it into a powerful factor in economic development. The 1963 UN Conference for International Travel and Tourism in Rome issued *Recommendations on International Travel & Tourism*, declaring, tourism to be “a vital element in the framework of the United Nations Development Decade”<sup>500</sup>. In the subsequent campaign, the governments of developing countries were strongly encouraged to prioritise the tourism sector in their development plans.<sup>501</sup> The UN International Tourist year in 1967 provided a strong visual outcome of this programme, in addition to the 1966 ECOSOC policy “inviting the international financing agencies to provide the developing countries [...] assistance for the promotion of tourism.”<sup>502</sup> At the same time, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released a recommendation “urging [...] particularly the developing countries to promote tourism, which makes a vital contribution to their economic growth.”<sup>503</sup>

Behind every policy or recommendation drafted was an extensive roster of scientific expertise, mainly recruited from economic planning theory and practice, a field that dominated the process of wording the doctrines for the UN Development Decade. One very influential doctrine held that many of the so-called developing countries, especially in Africa, were virtually bare of raw resources or the potential to modernise and industrialise fast enough to keep pace with a growing global economy. In order to achieve significant earnings of foreign currency, the key object was to find trade that would make it possible to achieve the maximum amount of commodification without requiring a large investment or any industrial production.<sup>504</sup> Tourism promised to readily deliver on that expectation—tourism to heritage-sites was specifically proposed and hailed in many so-called developing countries as their most promising resource. This tourism business did not yet exist in most countries, but rising numbers were predicted by many planners, entrepreneurs and politicians, and the main goal of the technical assistance for the development of tourism was to facilitate it.<sup>505</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> United Nations Conference on International Travel and Tourism, *Recommendations on International Travel and Tourism*, 17.

<sup>501</sup> Marie-Françoise Lanfant, “Tourism in the Process of Internationalization,” *International Social Science Journal* 32, no. 1 (1980): 15.

<sup>502</sup> Unesdoc, UNESCO General Conference, “Resolutions of the Fourteenth Session, 1966,” 1966, 62.

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>504</sup> Watterson, *Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States - Report of a Symposium Organized by CCTA and IUCN and Held under the Auspices of FAO and UNESCO at Arusha, Tanganyika, September 1961*, 22.

<sup>505</sup> Domestic tourism, in the sense of mass tourism and a proper industry developed around it, was not arriving in developing countries before economic growth and a critical size of urban middle class, K. B. Ghimire, ed., *The Native Tourist: Mass Tourism within Developing Countries* (London: Earthscan, 2001), 8–11.

In a more idealistic approach, tourism was seen as a mechanism to redistribute the resources of rich societies to poor ones, contributing to the restructuring of the international economic system towards a New International Economic Order. Tourism seemed particularly suitable since it presented a non-threatening export industry, offering a product that had no competition anything produced in the domestic industries of the global north.<sup>506</sup>

Practically, tourism seemed to be the most valuable export product for some countries. Furthermore, there was the broader belief of economists and other international development experts that it was the only hope for many so-called developing countries to materialise economic potential and surpass their “under-development”. As global revenue from foreign tourism increased by 75% between 1958 and 1963, many considered tourism as the universal remedy for countries lacking a developed industrial sector or natural resources ready to exploit.<sup>507</sup> While in reality a large part of the increase in tourist activities was confined to the Western Hemisphere, this favourable development was readily projected onto regions rich in potential destinations all over the world, such as South East Asia, Latin America and East Africa.

Tourism as a global phenomenon during the period 1960-1980 has to be understood in perspective, since only a certain percentage of the world’s population was able to engage in such travel. Mass-tourism on a global scale, was, despite the exploding numbers of tourist arrivals during the 1960s, largely confined to the Western hemisphere. The vast majority of arrivals were registered in Europe and Northern America, meaning it was Europeans traveling inside of Europe or American or Canadian citizens traveling inside Northern America. A smaller number of tourists from these Western countries travelled to non-Western countries, generally neighbouring ones.<sup>508</sup>

### **Tourism as Africa’s big chance for development**

In a study commissioned in 1968 by the UNECA, the UN tourism expert Vojislav Popovic argued for the tourism potential of Eastern African countries in particular based on the steady rise of the average disposable income in Western countries. Given the equidistant location of Eastern Africa to Western tourist’s countries of origin in comparison with

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<sup>506</sup> Emmanuel De Kadt, World Bank, and Unesco, *Tourism. Passport to Development? Perspectives on the Social and Cultural Effects of Tourism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), xiii; Lanfant, “Tourism,” 19.

<sup>507</sup> N. N., “1967 - International Tourist Year,” *UNESCO Courier* 19, no. 12 (1966): 6.

<sup>508</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Elements of Tourism Policy in Developing Countries - Report by the Secretariat of UNCTAD* (New York: United Nations, 1973), 4-7.

more established destinations<sup>509</sup>, he argued further that it would only be a matter of developing competitive destination values and promoting them effectively. He identified the North American and the Japanese markets as the most relevant target groups for marketing and pricing strategies, necessitating a focus on reducing the cost of transportation as a first step, and in shaping the tourist attractions to the liking of American tourists as a second step.<sup>510</sup> According to Popovic, leisure and nature would not be interesting enough for American tourists to travel overseas, but cultural performances, artefacts and places: in short, authentic heritage.<sup>511</sup>

American tourists are genuinely interested in people, their way of life, both modern and traditional, old customs, folk dances and songs, old architecture, large cities, shopping, handicraft, and with good promotion a considerably larger number of American tourists may become equally interested in wildlife.<sup>512</sup>

In 1968, tourism presented the largest source of foreign currency for some East African countries like Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, it was a vital factor of economic development, even ahead of coffee or tea.<sup>513</sup> Experts commonly made gross generalisations, claiming that tourism to be “the fastest growing and potentially the largest single East African foreign exchange earner”, and often their assessment extended beyond the economic sphere, going as far as to praise the supposedly beneficial “social welfare” effects that the mere presence of tourists (read: rich, white foreigners) would have for the local people.<sup>514</sup> With an equally strong cultural- and eco-racist underpinning, experts considered tourism to East Africa to be fuelled mainly by the “growing preference of the European public for sunny and warm climates”<sup>515</sup>, the desire to enjoy “unspoiled nature, including tropical forests, magnificent waterfalls, lovely lakes, unusually scenic mountains”<sup>516</sup>, features perceived to be on the decline in Europe. As the rapporteur at the 1961 *Arusha Conference on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources* in modern African

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<sup>509</sup> such as the Middle East (including Turkey and Greece), the USA, Canada, Mexico, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Bermuda and Trinidad and Tobago, Vojislav Popovic, *Tourism in Eastern Africa*. (München: Weltforum Verlag, 1972), 16, 17.

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., 17–24.

<sup>511</sup> What Jonas Larsen and John Urry describe as “intangible products” and “aesthetic services”, Jonas Larsen and John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*. (London: Sage Publications UK, 2011), 77.

<sup>512</sup> Popovic, *Tourism*, 25.

<sup>513</sup> Joseph P. Ouma, *Evolution of Tourism in East Africa: 1990-2000* (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1970), preface.

<sup>514</sup> Frank Mitchell, “The Value of Tourism in East Africa” (Discussion Paper No. 82, University College, Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, Social Science Division, n.d.), 1–3.

<sup>515</sup> Popovic, *Tourism*, 14.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid., 19.

States summarised: “The National Parks and reserves of Africa have a wonderful opportunity of filling a world need—modern man’s craving for contact with nature.”<sup>517</sup>

These experts deemed it safe to predict a steady growth of tourism on the basis of this analysis, a growth that would divert cash flows from the prosperous countries of origin of said tourists straight into the national economies of their destinations.<sup>518</sup> After his 1960 mission for the conservation of wildlife in East Africa, Julian Huxley, prominent spokesperson for African Wildlife in the context of UNESCO (and former DG of UNESCO), summarised and emphasised what many believed to be the solution for East Africa in particular:

The total revenue from tourism in the four territories of East Africa together is today well over [GBP] 10.000.000. I would prophesy that this could certainly be increased fivefold, and quite probably tenfold, within the present decade. So long as Western prosperity continues, with Western populations (and their revenues) increasing and Western industrialization being intensified, it is safe to forecast that more and more people will want to escape farther and farther from it and its concomitants, in the shape of over-large or over-crowded cities, urban sprawl, noise, smog, boring routine, deprivation of contact with nature, and general over-mechanization of existence. Air travel will certainly become cheaper and more popular, and will be able to take more people farther afield on more adventurous journeys. Given that there is no major war in the world and no outbreak of violent disorder in our region, an increasing proportion of this population of travellers could be readily induced to make eastern Africa their goal.<sup>519</sup>

Some experts used tourism as an argument because they thought it would be the best method of interesting the governments in conservation, an issue that would otherwise enjoy a low priority. At the 1961 conference in the context of the FAO/IUCN special project “Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in modern African States”, tourism was explicitly promoted and intensively discussed by many of the participants—experts and politicians concerned with nature conservation in Africa—as the main incentive to establish natural conservation according to Western ideas in African societies. In his speech, the Tanganyikan Minister of Lands and Surveys, T.S. Tewa, stated:

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<sup>517</sup> Watterson, *Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States - Report of a Symposium Organized by CCTA and IUCN and Held under the Auspices of FAO and UNESCO at Arusha, Tanganyika, September 1961*, 22.

<sup>518</sup> Popovic, *Tourism*, 188.

<sup>519</sup> Huxley, “The Conservation of Wild Life and Natural Habitats in Central and East Africa,” 87, 88.

It must, however, be said that the almost mystical and romantic regard for wild animals which some people have, has often puzzled the peoples of Africa. To many Africans, the elephant is a dangerous agricultural pest, the lion a savage killer of men and stock, and the wildebeest an unwelcome competitor for scarce grazing. Residents in Africa expect protection from damage by game and they expect to see that where human interests and those of animals conflict, the interests of animals are allowed to prevail only in carefully chosen and restricted areas. But if the mass of my countrymen are to be enlisted in the ranks of conservationists, they will need to be convinced not only that the animals in these restricted areas, that is the Parks and Reserves, can be more use to them alive than dead, but that the money necessary to preserve them would not be better spent on more schools and doctors. In other words, they will expect us to see that what they are told is “their heritage”, however valuable it may be as a cultural asset, can still be made to earn its keep. Can this be done? I believe it can—through tourism.<sup>520</sup>

It was not only national parks that were promoted to African governments with the explicit economic benefit of tourism development. The concept of biosphere reserves also became popular as protection schemes for application in Africa. Tourism was foreseen as a means for revenue and to secure an alternative source of livelihood for the people living in the protected areas. This concept of natural and cultural heritage a focal point for tourism and development, and as economic resource, continued in the following decades. In 1980, during the ECA's 212<sup>th</sup> meeting, the conservation of wildlife was mentioned in a resolution, for “the importance of wildlife in the social and economic development of African states and in the balance of the region's ecosystem, and in particular its contributions to the growth of national tourism industry and the improvement of living conditions.”<sup>521</sup>

The concept of tourism as an economic resource helped make African countries internationally visible in a more positive light than many other development activities had done, because assistance for tourism development operated on the premise of there being existing resources on the ground, meaning a richness of cultural and natural heritage, ra-

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<sup>520</sup> T. S. Tewa, “The Value of the Tourist Industry in the Conservation of Natural Resources in Tanganyika,” in *Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Modern African States - Report of a Symposium Organized by CCTA and IUCN and Held under the Auspices of FAO and UNESCO at Arusha, Tanganyika, September 1961*, ed. Gerald G. Watterson (Morges: IUCN, 1963), 337.

<sup>521</sup> Report of the ECA 212<sup>th</sup> meeting on the 12.4.1980 in Addis, 388(XV), in: UNESCO 069:72 (6) UNDP pt. I; Hugh F. Lamprey, “The Distribution of Protected Areas in Relation to the Needs of Biotic Community Conservation in Eastern Africa: A Paper Presented at the Regional Meeting on Co-Ordinated System of National Parks and Reserves in Eastern Africa, Serengeti National Park, Tanzania, 14-19 October 1974,” 1975, 9.

ther than a lack of resources. For many countries this appeared to be a desirable opportunity to present themselves in a positive light and make themselves known.

During the 1960s many African countries indeed started to see the arrival of tourists, but the situation and the results varied tremendously between countries.<sup>522</sup> In some countries, for example Morocco and Tunisia, the tourism sectors were economically beneficial, but the necessary sectorial investments still left the tourism sector as a net consumer of surplus, meaning that the overall profit from tourism was still lower than the investments. This created a positive balance for economic development but a negative one for the gross national product. For some countries on the other hand, such as Kenya and Tanzania, earnings through tourism were relatively weak but still a major contributor to GNP and presented, for some years at least, the largest source of foreign currency in otherwise weak economies. In the end, differences between individual developing countries were large and not easy to explain, let alone to compare or transfer, in effect rendering the prognosis behind the tourism development policies of ECOSOC, UNCTAD and the respective expert studies as pure speculation.<sup>523</sup>

Nevertheless, while these countries served as examples of the positive impact of tourism on economic development, presenting exaggerated prognoses for the economic benefit was a common strategy in consultant reports to stimulate a maximum amount of investment and follow-up funding. International experts' assessment usually led to the inclusion of the experts' recommendations in the national five-year development plans, prompting the launch of further technical assistance for infrastructure and vocational training, for preservation and for the presentation of sites. Technical assistance linked to conservation and tourism carried with it secondary benefits in terms of infrastructural investments in areas ranging from the production of statistical data to the training of skilled labourers and transportation. In many cases, tourism development opened up yet another line of argumentation for large projects from the World Bank or similar donor organisations.<sup>524</sup>

In reality, in many countries the growth of a national tourism sector was inhibited by the lack of effective state policies. Furthermore, the allocation of resources, consistent sectorial planning and a feasible integration of tourism in national development plans was beyond the capacity of many governments. In fact, it was often the case that an increase in

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<sup>522</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Elements of Tourism Policy in Developing Countries - Report by the Secretariat of UNCTAD*, 6-7.

<sup>523</sup> Herbold Reginald Green, "Toward Planning Tourism in African Countries," in De Kadt, Emanuel, *Tourism - Passport to Development?* (Washington: The World Bank, 1979), 80.

<sup>524</sup> De Kadt, World Bank, and Unesco, *Tourism*, 11; Mitchell, "The Value of Tourism in East Africa," 7; Ouma, *Evolution of Tourism in East Africa*, 77.

tourist arrivals didn't necessarily result in corresponding growth in the tourist sector. Package tours, organised by European or North American tour operators, were often completely devoid of any substantial effect on the national economy of the destination country, as the profit was earned in the tourists' country of origin. This resulted in a very low rate of gross foreign exchange inflow, with the operators having no viable interest in buying and hiring locally, justifying their decision by referring to the insufficient standard available. The introduction of protectionist European airport and charter-flight regulations made it impossible for African and Asian airlines themselves to operate flights for tourists from Europe to their countries, adding to that negative effect.<sup>525</sup> It was a catch-22 situation: countries that lacked funds to provide the necessary infrastructure also lacked the tourists required to generate the critical amount of income necessary for these funds. The positive expectations of the potential benefits and outcomes of tourism were tempered by strong criticism which questioned not only these promises and potential benefits, but also drew attention to the negative impact and inherent risks for the destination countries in the developing world. The promises of tourism remained a dream removed from reality for many countries and a strong critical tourism discourse emerged in parallel from the 1960s. Because of the general skills shortage in many developing countries, tourism development would not only cause a brain drain from more important sectors, it would also necessitate a high cost in expatriate skills. Due to its complexity and context-sensitivity, tourism was declared to be a highly unsustainable economic product. Anchored in a scientific analysis of sociocultural costs and benefits, studies aimed to show the exploitative tendencies of speculative land booms, the high investment necessary to create jobs in the tourism industry, and the reinforcement of divisions along social strata through large scale developments.<sup>526</sup>

## 5.2 UNESCO's cultural tourism assistance: development funds for heritage

The intertwining of the growing relevance of tourism and the development paradigm, which turned cultural and natural heritage into an economic resource, provided a unique

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<sup>525</sup> Green, "Toward Planning Tourism in African Countries," 83, 89; N.B Salazar, "A Troubled Past, a Challenging Present, and a Promising Future: Tanzania's Tourism Development in Perspective," *Tourism Review International* 12, no. 3/4 (2008): 4-6; Akama, "Neocolonialism," 147-50.

<sup>526</sup> This critical discourse marked the beginning of an orientation in anthropological tourism research towards the impact of tourism, establishing concepts such as John Urry's theory of the "tourist gaze" and its transformative power on host societies. De Kadt, World Bank, and Unesco, *Tourism*, 34-49; Lanfant, "Tourism," 17-22; an excellent more recent overview is provided in: W.E.A. van Beek and A.m. Schmidt, "African Dynamics of Cultural Tourism," in *African Hosts and Their Guests - Cultural Dynamics of Tourism*, ed. W.E.A. van Beek and Annette Schmidt (Netherlands, Europe: James Currey, 2012), 1-37.

chance for UNESCO to enter the development playing field. By 1960, while mainly involved in educational efforts of technical assistance, UNESCO's division for cultural heritage saw itself at the intersection of both of the main arguments for tourism: the idea that tourism could promote international understanding and education, as well as the requirement to develop cultural heritage as a resource in a responsible manner, and felt obliged to advance both causes.<sup>527</sup> Tourism, for UNESCO, promised to be a highly effective pedagogic tool, aiming to present the monuments as teaching institutions for history. UNESCO initially saw itself as only concerned with tourism in cases where tourism development projects carried a cultural component.<sup>528</sup> Its contribution to tourism aimed to counterbalance the purely economic interest in tourism research and planning with educational, cultural and scientific impulses.

One of the responses that developed from the criticism of (mass) tourism was the concept of cultural tourism. One paradigm of tourism that guided commercial expansion and touristic enterprises was “bringing the known to the unknown”, but the detrimental effect of commodifying culture and heritage on local communities and traditional values and cultural practices was quickly raised as an issue. Cultural tourism set out as a counter-movement, not intending to conceptualise tourism as a means to increase economic development or for profit, but rather aiming to curb the destructive impact of economic principles on cultural identities and communities. Through efforts at cultural tourism, such as sensitive marketing arrangements, the government-guided production of arts and crafts souvenirs, or planning codes aiming to create an “integrated environment”, beneficial for locals and tourists alike in historic urban centres, tourism was believed to help the preservation of cultural and craft traditions.<sup>529</sup>

After several studies on the social impact of tourism, the conclusion that tourism presented not only a chance for education and income, but indeed a veritable danger to traditional culture in hosting countries became more widespread. In a report from 1974, Peter Lengyel, editor of UNESCO's *International Journal of Social Sciences*, shared his observation on cultural tourism in Bali, which was a major focal point where tourism and its effects were perceived as a problem by the political authorities of the country itself:

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<sup>527</sup> UNESCO, 72/EX/Decisions, Art. 10, 1966.

<sup>528</sup> Letter from J. Hardouin, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72:380.8 A 193.

<sup>529</sup> De Kadt, World Bank, and Unesco, *Tourism*, 68–76.



It would seem to me to be impossible in these days of mass travel for a small but well-known place [...] to maintain its culture in a frozen state since obviously the changing life and the consciousness [of the local population] will cut them off increasingly from their own roots.<sup>530</sup>

He argued for an international responsibility to empower local culture, and educate and train the local population better so they would have something to shield them from the “tastes of indiscriminating Philistines”<sup>531</sup>, who were just trophy-hunting for objects that resembled their imagination of the destination.

### **Turning the monuments into paying affairs: funding conservation through tourism development**

In reality, UNESCO’s cultural tourism assistance projects were not exactly a counter-concept, but merely an attempt to connect some of UNESCO’s cultural concerns to a more widely recognised line of argumentation for development assistance. When promoting the issue of cultural tourism and conservation to governments of developing countries, in many cases UNESCO argued for and justified the initiative of projects with the supposed economic stipulation resulting from the projects. In Burma, a request for assistance for conservation was declined, with UNESCO stating it could only give funds if the conservation was for tourism development purposes.<sup>532</sup> It was declared a prerequisite that firstly tourism had been evaluated as a major source of potential income to the country and then, secondly, the monuments could be proven to contribute significantly to that potential.

With economic development becoming the *ultima ratio* for all sizeable amounts of funding within the UN system, tourism was a welcome opportunity to connect a chronically under-financed activity, the conservation of cultural and natural goods, to existing cash-flows.<sup>533</sup> It was a generally accepted fact that there was a lack of funds for conservation in developing countries, as was the suggestion that tourism could serve as a potential source for these funds. Yet, some experts went even further, stating that the conservation of monuments and wildlife presented the only major potential for tourism in most developing countries, as people would not travel so far simply to spend leisure time at a beach.

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<sup>530</sup> Report on cultural tourism in Bali from Mr. Peter Lengyel, January 1974, in: 069:72:380.8 A 193.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>532</sup> Letter from Hiroshi Daifuku to T.R. Gairola, 21.5.1970, in: 069:72 (591) AMS. Document courtesy of Clara Relensmann.

<sup>533</sup> This is the general tone of the numerous reports and papers, illustrating the cultural tourism discourse in UNESCO, in: UNESCO 069:72:380.8 A 193.

Heritage, in most developing countries, was considered an attraction at the core of a destination.

Tourism, both natural and cultural, emerged as an issue in international conservation programmes from the 1950s on, and came with a distinct economic reasoning. It was mentioned as early as 1949 as one of the “problems of common interest to organisations concerned with [...] sites and monuments of art and history” in a meeting of experts on sites and monuments of art and history, taking place at UNESCO.<sup>534</sup> Tourism, and more specifically the economic potential of tourism as regards historic sites, was a factor that arose from the international perspective on historic monuments and the creation of the idea of a global heritage landscape. Monuments, sites and nature were already features of tourist destinations in Europe, so the principle was transferred to the new international scope, and the idea of economic profit from tourism to benefit the conservation of monuments was expressed in proposals, such as the 1951 plan to adopt an international convention that would institute a special tourist tax for the preservation of monuments and museums.<sup>535</sup>

In 1962, tourism was stated to be an important means of action in the first plan of proposed action for UNESCO’s international campaign for monuments.<sup>536</sup> UNESCO’s division of museums and monuments commissioned a study to evaluate tourism statistics, in order to develop a concept for an “international fund for monuments.”<sup>537</sup> These concerns were motivated by an acute shortage of funds for the aspirations of international conservation experts. In 1963, several UNESCO member states suggested budget cuts for conservation activities, insisting that the planned activities of the Museum and Monuments division were inappropriately extensive or unrealistic.<sup>538</sup>

The Nubian monuments campaign had appeared so promising, and had generated so much attention and funds donated to it, that other campaigns and efforts were halted for the duration of the campaign, so as to not overburden public affection and generosity for the cause of monument conservation. This underlined the awareness of the international heritage experts within the UNESCO secretariat that general affection for safeguarding of heritage was limited. This necessitated strategic planning, based on the assessment of UNESCO staff of what would produce the most promising positive public response. The

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<sup>534</sup> Unesdoc, Georges Henri Rivière, “Meeting of Experts on Sites and Monuments of Art and History; Paris; 1949.

<sup>535</sup> Unesdoc, Preliminary Study on the advisability of international measures for the institution of a special tourist tax, submitted to Executive Board, Paris, 12.1.1951.

<sup>536</sup> Template letter from DG René Maheu to ministers of member states, 31.7.1962, in: UNESCO 069:72 A14.

<sup>537</sup> Letter from Giorgio Rosi to Conrad André Beerli, 2.8.62, in: UNESCO 069:72 A14.

<sup>538</sup> Memo on comments on draft resolution by member states from Museum and Monuments Division to Gomes Machado, in UNESCO 069:72 A14.

international community could not be burdened with more than one big campaign at a time.<sup>539</sup>

In the context of the first UN Development Decade, the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and the promotion of tourism and the concerns of development, were combined, like a match made in heaven, into a momentous plan called “Associating the preservation of cultural property with the development of tourism”:

How can money be raised for the restoration of protection of the world’s heritage of monuments? A new Unesco [sic] plan offers an answer—turn the monuments into paying affairs. Unesco [...] suggests, that countries should turn their cultural assets into economic ones by giving priority to monuments in programmes of tourist development. [...] Unesco is studying how funds for such projects can be obtained from regional and international organisations and through the U.N. Development Programme, since the tourist industry is seen as a key factor in economic development.”<sup>540</sup>

While initially the promotion of conservation can also be interpreted in the interests of elaborating UNESCO’s global guidance culture so as to strengthen and expand the organisation’s role, it was quickly superseded by the development aspect.<sup>541</sup> By nature, since the funding of conservation was organised through the UNDP, it could only be targeted at so called “developing countries”. In this light, conservation was only one of many activities an “underdeveloped” country could neither finance nor had the skilled manpower for, and for which foreign aid and assistance needed to be given by Western donor states, distributed and managed by UNESCO and through projects carried out by UNDP. Project activities initially focused on the field of applied conservation but were not limited to that. Soon, the conceptual scope broadened and diversified, and the experts in charge developed activities aimed at building national capacity, and installing prerequisites for institutional conservation such as legal provisions, conservation authorities, museums, archives, research, training, etc. However small those project budgets were in comparison to the international assistance provided for education and industrial development, access to funding remained strictly tied to the premise that the cultural and natural conserva-

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<sup>539</sup> Several letters referring to the delay of the monuments campaign and cutting back the responsible staff in UNESCO, in: UNESCO 069:72 A 14; S. Pierre Petrides, Memorandum on the project for restoration and conservation of the monuments of Lalibela, in: NALE 1.2.26.5, Lalibela Committee.

<sup>540</sup> N. N., “Cultural Tourism - The Unexploited Treasure of Economic Development,” *UNESCO Courier* 19, no. 12 (1966): 11-13; unesdoc, “UNESCO. Executive Board; 72nd Session; 1966,” n.d.

<sup>541</sup> See ch. 2; Peter Bille Larsen, “The Politics of Technicality: Guidance Culture in Environmental Governance and the International Sphere,” *The Gloss of Harmony: The Politics of Policy-Making in Multilateral Organisations*, no. e-book (2013): 100, 101; Barnett and Finnemore, *Rules*, 31, 33.

tion activities in question would foster economic development. Over the course of the 1960s, the organisation developed a more detailed position, advocating the preservation of natural and cultural heritage as a “major contribution to the social and economic development of countries”<sup>542</sup> in 1968.

### **The UNESCO cultural tourism missions 1966-1980**

In practice this resulted in a number of expert missions concerned with tourism, based on requests from so-called developing countries. Between 1966 and 1980 alone, missions were carried out to the following twenty-three countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia (Bali), Iran, Libya, Malta, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Kenya, Pakistan, Peru, the Dominican Republic, the United Arab Republic, Thailand<sup>543</sup>.

*Per* its definition, the technical assistance for the development of tourism was confined to developing countries. The experts, however, were of Western provenance.<sup>544</sup> When these experts spoke of tourism in their reports, they operated strictly on the basis of the imagined potential of tourism coming from Western countries to the so-called developing ones.

The tourism development missions between 1966 and 1980 were all very similar in terms of the initial task outlined, and consisted of assisting the government in developing recommendations on the establishment of tourism as a source of economic development, and in giving directions for developing existing resources of natural or cultural sites to a standard sufficient for their touristic exploitation. Operating strictly on the premise that historical sites and natural beauty presented the only potential points of touristic interest in all of the aforementioned countries, the consultants travelled to assess the respective sites in question, and the country in general, according to their destination value. In most cases, the experts were affiliated not with the field of tourism or economic planning, but rather with the fields of architecture, art history or natural science. Nonetheless, they were tasked with analysing the tourism potential, and counted hotel beds and smooth surface road-kilometres, evaluated the quality of service and attractions offered, and delivered

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<sup>542</sup> Unesdoc, UNESCO General Conference, „Records of the General Conference, Fifteenth Session, Paris 1968, Resolutions“.

<sup>543</sup> Decisions taken during the Sixth Review of Operational Projects financed from UNDP, UNFPA and under funds-in-trust, May 1982, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ixb; surely, a comparative study of all the countries would bring fruitful insights regarding the influence and role of these missions.

<sup>544</sup> As an exception could be considered the chairman of the Maltese Tourism Commission, who served as an expert advisor for the report on Nepal, while at the same time the Maltese government received a similar mission: J. Mougin, “Malta - Conservation of Sites and Monuments in the Development of Tourism” (UNESCO, 1967), unesdoc.org; E.A. Connally, “Nepal” (UNESCO, 1968), unesdoc.org.

investment and profitability recommendations. Finally, they developed concrete plans and proposals, ranging from legislative and administrative changes, to social and urban planning, to specific restoration works.

While UNESCO successfully managed to establish a counter-voice to the economic focus within the tourism discourse in particular, and the development discourse in general, it remains questionable whether these efforts of tourism development were ever of any sufficient quality. Just as the economic analysis lacked an understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, the reports drawn up by those who were conservators and architects by training lacked economic expertise, yet they included estimates for the capital public and private investments necessary for the planning and development of airport infrastructure and road networks.<sup>545</sup>

### **5.3 Tourism planning and promotion in Ethiopia 1960-1980**

The promising and enthusiastic forecasts regarding the economic potential of tourism development for African countries were received with open ears in Ethiopia. Modern tourism had evolved since the early 1950s as an economic sector for which the government took responsibility, with foreign technical assistance for planning and execution. In the context of tourism, experts argued for investment in conservation to increase the destination value of heritage sites. Consequently, in Ethiopia, like in most African countries, national parks and monuments were part of the tourism commission's responsibility, and the conservation and general investment in the sites of cultural and natural heritage turned into aspects of development planning.

#### **The first Ethiopian government institutions for tourism**

It was the national airline, EAL, which introduced for the first time the notion of modern tourism. Founded in 1946 in partnership with the private US-corporation Trans World Airlines (TWA), EAL played a crucial role in national integration and economic development in Ethiopia. The airline was a very successful enterprise, starting to earn profit only a few years after its founding, and gaining a reputation for its services and increasing relevance as an African hub for airtravel. Establishing air trade routes increased the strategic and technological capacities of the Ethiopian government, fast forwarding Ethiopian in-

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<sup>545</sup> Angelini and Mougin, "Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism," Annexes 3, 4, 5, 6, 9; J.C. Pollacco, "Nepal - Development of Cultural Tourism" (Paris, September, 1968: UNESCO, n.d.), 12-18.

tegration by it improving mobility and strengthening connections between existing urban centres, and the role of Addis Ababa as the capital city. Air travel helped with the strategic efforts to increase the country's power and relevance, by creating a new landscape within Ethiopia, and by strengthening its connectivity with Europe and rebuilding the image of the country.<sup>546</sup>

As early as 1950, EAL began to promote package tours within EAL's domestic flight routes to the international audience residing in Addis, which was composed of diplomats, foreign experts and their families.<sup>547</sup> As most of these expatriate residents were remunerated from external sources, this particular kind of domestic tourism presented a means to absorb a part of this foreign exchange into the Ethiopian national economy.<sup>548</sup> From the 1960s, Ethiopian airlines advertisement started targeting the North-Atlantic market.<sup>549</sup> In the second five-year development plan of 1962, "the pleasant climate, mineral hot springs, natural beauty, historical monuments and hunting possibilities [...]" were seen to "constitute untapped sources of the national wealth and offer great possibilities for the development of planned tourism."<sup>550</sup> The plan foresaw selected government investment in building hotels and accommodation as well as organising tourist-information centres abroad, restoring historical monuments, and the development of one selected site with additional facilities as a showcase-project. As a sidenote, the establishment of game-reserves and national parks as tourist attractions was included in the "Fishing & Forestry" section of the plan.<sup>551</sup>

With the establishment of the ETO in 1964, the government acknowledged the increasingly central role of tourism for economic growth. The ETO was responsible for several aspects related to tourism development in order to systematically address existing problems. In its duty-free shops, "King Solomon's Mines", they sold "tourist art" handicraft articles in addition to regular duty-free items such as liquor and tobacco. These articles resembled traditional cultural items and were specifically designed and produced in workshops operated by the ETO. This created additional income, enabling the ETO to operate tours and car-hires. The ETO and EAL not only acted as tour operators but also operated a number of hotels, the only ones with standard fittings deemed suitable to host interna-

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<sup>546</sup> Ethiopian Airlines, *Bringing Africa Together*. (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian Airlines, 1989), 100-103; Theodore Geiger, *The Case Study of TWA's Service to Ethiopia*, vol. 8, United States Business Performance Abroad (National Planning Association, 1959), 62-71.

<sup>547</sup> Travel News, no date, in: NALE 1.2.12.01, Ethiopian Airlines.

<sup>548</sup> I argue to understand this as a strategy of the Ethiopian government to monetise Addis Ababa's role as diplomatic and international hub, through the luxury hotels, the high import tax on luxury goods and the duty free shops of the ETO. Popovic, *Tourism*, 91.

<sup>549</sup> Several brochures in: NALE 1.2.12.01, Ethiopian Airlines; Addis Ababa became the most important African hub for air travel, Geiger, *TWA*, 8:71.

<sup>550</sup> Imperial Ethiopian Government, *Second Five Year Development Plan, 1963-1976* (Addis Ababa: Berhanenna Selam Printing Press, 1962), 240.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

tional travellers and tourists. Most importantly, the ETO developed a marketing strategy as well as extensive tourism promotion material<sup>552</sup>.

With neighbouring countries such as Kenya held up as positive examples, “it was envisaged that much more attention will be given to the possibilities of tourism as a potential source of foreign currency than has been possible in the past.”<sup>553</sup> Tourism was promoted by the third five-year development plan of 1968 as the key to bettering the country’s economic well-being. Insisting on a more integrated, inter-sectoral approach that would turn tourism in a government responsibility in its own right, rather than splitting up responsibilities between different sub-divisions of ministries, the third five-year plan proposed a co-ordinated development plan for tourism to define more clearly the role of the government in the tourist industry. A decade of more extensive tourism planning followed these assessments. In the 1969 *Ethiopian Tourist Development Plan*, commissioned from an Italian planning firm, high expectations for tourism were clearly expressed. In just eight years the investment planned for tourism was believed to have returned equivalent benefits in full, in addition turning a capital investment of 92 million Ethiopian dollars into a total income of 450 million Ethiopian dollars within thirteen years, with indirect benefits believed to be four times as high.<sup>554</sup>

To reach these goals, however, the need for investment in tourism was great. On a more general level “the lack of necessary infrastructure, the lack of special air fares making it possible to include Ethiopia in East African and all-African tours, the lack of travel promotion in overseas markets”<sup>555</sup> all presented difficulties that had to be overcome. The tourism development strategy showed results first insofar as it attracted further international assistance. According to an assessment of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), “tourism would be the second most important source of foreign trade for Ethiopia (following the export of coffee)” and considered a crucial factor for economic development, as it seemed capable of considerable expansion.<sup>556</sup> Subsequently, a World Bank loan for the development of tourism—including the preservation of sites and monuments—was approved.<sup>557</sup>

For a few years tourism was played up as a cure-all of Ethiopia’s development problems. Not only was it able to earn the revenue necessary for further economic development, it was also believed to act as a vehicle for key infrastructure projects such as transportation

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<sup>552</sup> Seleshi Sisay, “Swedish Aid to Ethiopia, 1954-1967,” *Journal of African Studies* 8, no. 2 (1981): 92; Tafesse Habte Selassie, “Tourism,” *Encyclopedia Aethiopica* (Harrassowitz, 2011), 973.

<sup>553</sup> Letter from Belai Abbai to Malcolm Adiseshiah, 4.1.1968, UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iv.

<sup>554</sup> Ianus, Organizzazione per gli studi e le ricerche di economia applicata - S. p. A., *Ethiopian Tourist Development Plan*, 12.

<sup>555</sup> Popovic, *Tourism*, 97.

<sup>556</sup> Project report, no date, in UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. vi.

<sup>557</sup> Letter from M. Jimenez to Bruce Stedman, 13.3.74, in UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. i.

and electricity that had failed to be realised in their own right. Additionally, tourism was valued for increasing the visibility of the country and its image on an international scale. Ethiopia's main asset in terms of tourism was, in fact, not the mass-tourism market flowing into coastal resorts or which looked for easy, pre-arranged "wildlife-coast" packages, but its "appeal [...] to the well-to-do, sophisticated sightseeing tourists"<sup>558</sup>. These were the experienced international travellers seeking out the unique and largely different attractions of Ethiopia: unspoiled nature, fascinating landscapes, numerous ethnic groups and "the long history of independent rule, the traditional dynasty whose origin is interwoven with legend of the pre-Christian era [...which] make Ethiopia a country whose original features can very well be used to create a touristically very attractive image in the minds of the public and tour organizers."<sup>559</sup>

### **UNESCO's support for Ethiopian tourism development**

The increased priority on the development of tourism prompted an increase in attention from UNESCO, as it promised to provide larger budgets for projects to develop.<sup>560</sup> Shortly after the Ethiopian Ministry of Planning announced the new orientation of the development plan as regards tourism, UNESCO's office of relations with member states (not the cultural heritage division) organised a mission to Ethiopia. The monuments, wildlife areas and scenic landscapes lacked the provisions to be visited by larger crowds or a high number of visitors over the year. In 1968, even the infrastructure of the major points of touristic interest, along the "Historic Route", was assessed to be largely insufficient and incapable of absorbing even a relatively minor growth in tourist numbers.<sup>561</sup> Initiating this mission, similarly to previous successful missions in other countries "where important projects for conservation and development of sites and monuments [were] now under way", were a team composed of an architect-restorer, an economist-planner and a member of the UNESCO secretariat.<sup>562</sup> This interaction effectively bypassed the institutions officially in charge of international assistance to Ethiopian heritage-making on both sides, marking the beginning of the many activities involving UNESCO that would result in the consideration that Ethiopian heritage was fit to be included in the World Heritage list.

As a result of this, during the visit of UNESCO's DG René Maheu in Ethiopia, cultural tourism was adopted as a special point into the cooperation agreement between the imperial

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<sup>558</sup> Popovic, *Tourism*, 92.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>560</sup> In the letter from Belai Abbai to Malcolm Adiseshiah (footnote 553) the word tourism was circled in red.

<sup>561</sup> Angelini and Mougin, "Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism," 5.

<sup>562</sup> Response letter from Malcolm Adiseshiah to Abbai, 14.2.68, UNESCO X07.21 (63) pt. iv.



Ethiopian government and UNESCO. The detailed explanation of the “cultural tourism” point declared that UNESCO would provide assistance in creating an inventory of monuments and works of art, as well as for the preservation and conservation of nature.<sup>563</sup> UNESCO’s heritage experts readily picked up on the assessment that tourism was crucial for Ethiopia’s economic development and that the country had great potential, as tourism would provide the funds necessary for conservation. This explains why the UNESCO missions for cultural and natural heritage between 1968 and 1984 were concerned with tourism planning efforts in relation to wildlife and cultural heritage conservation. However, in the eyes of the heritage experts, the heritage sites as they were presented were merely a few diamonds in the rough, loosely strewn across the country, and were in dire need of structural improvement, conservation and image promotion. B. Gaidoni, the only UNESCO expert dealing with Ethiopian tourism development, with a specific background in tourism expertise, travelled along the “Historic Route” and, although he admitted that the monuments were in need of restoration and protection from vandalism and environmental influences, his main concern was the lack of destination value from the presumed tourist’s point of view. In addition to the improvement of hotel facilities, the service and number of available beds in general, his assessment was characterised by the idea that the monuments alone would not create enough value to make travel there worth the tourist’s while and money. For Lake Tana, he proposed, after an initial restoration of the churches on the Lake’s islands, the addition of sailing clubs, fishing lodges, bathing establishments and more, to “insure [sic] that visitors will come”<sup>564</sup>. For Gondar, he suggested a golf course, tennis courts and bowling grounds—clearly having the European/British upper class tourist in mind.<sup>565</sup> And, for Lalibela:

Entertainment is totally lacking. At least a small cafe or bar should be built [...]. A miniature golf and a swimming pool would add diversion for the tourist, because visiting the churches in the villages [...] would take more than one day.<sup>566</sup>

With all the modernisation and addition of leisurely facilities for the tourists’ sake, however, he cautioned that “the alteration to the character of the locale and to the landscape that these suggested changes would inevitably introduce, must be confined to the already urbanized areas” so as “not to alter in the least the appearance and authenticity of these other localities”. He wrote further that, “It would be a pity to destroy the possibility of the

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<sup>563</sup> Aide-memoire on points of agreement reached at the inter-ministerial meeting on cooperation between the imperial Ethiopian Government and UNESCO, 31.7.1968 in: UNESCO X07.21 (63) pt. iv.

<sup>564</sup> Gaidoni, “Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development,” 17.

<sup>565</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>566</sup> Ibid., 38.

elation of discovery."<sup>567</sup> Most noteworthy are Gaidoni's suggestions to not only improve the monuments as sights, but also to establish a showcase of local arts and crafts, as well as performances for the purpose of tourist entertainment. He suggested that the government should be enabled to take ultimate control over the manner of representation of the varied local ethnic identities of Ethiopia.

In accordance with the idea that tourism to the country's heritage sites would improve economic development, the first natural and cultural conservation consultancies and projects were concerned as much with tourism as with the heritage sites themselves.<sup>568</sup> In the project reports, the internationally acclaimed architects, art historians and wildlife experts who were sent on these consultancy missions by UNESCO, relentlessly emphasised the contribution that the development of historical monuments and sites would provide towards the growth of tourism. Summaries like the following one by Leslie Brown, wildlife advisor and later director of the EWCA can be found in all of the above-mentioned reports:

The present wildlife potential of Ethiopia is insufficient to support a large tourist industry on its own, in face of competition from nearby East African countries where game is more plentiful and more easily seen. The richness of Ethiopia's fauna lies more in its uniqueness than in the spectacular number of variety of animals to be seen, which tends to make it of less interest to the general public. The country has, however, historical sites and antiquities such as are to be found nowhere else in Africa south of the Sahara. It also has some of the grandest scenery in the world. Only by the inclusion of such attractions into the first major tourist circuits does it seem likely that a large enough flow of visitors can be created to provide the Board with the means to carry out its present primary task of saving some of the country's rarer animals<sup>569</sup>.

The experts' assessment of the tourism potential of individual heritage sites and their surrounding regions had a direct influence on which sites were given priority in the direction of international funds and national institutional capacities for conservation. Furthermore, it influenced the general programmatic direction of heritage-making in Ethiopia. Grimwood and Brown emphasised in their reports that a large enough touristic po-

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<sup>567</sup> Ibid., 17, 18.

<sup>568</sup> Huxley et al., "The Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in Ethiopia"; Brown, "Ethiopia - Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources"; Grimwood, "Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources"; Angelini and Mougin, "Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism"; Gaidoni, "Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development"; Angelini, "Ethiopia - The Historic Route, A Work-Plan for the Development of the Sites and Monuments."

<sup>569</sup> Brown, "Ethiopia - Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources," 2.

tential would only be created with a combined promotion of natural and cultural heritage, acknowledging at the same time the greater relevance and potential of cultural heritage as opposed to natural heritage. Consequently, the efforts taken in the following years were mainly in the areas of cultural heritage conservation and presentation.

As regards wildlife conservation, tourism underwent a transformation during this period from game safaris towards an emphasis on natural observation and photo safaris, and this process caused the proper development of a consistent strategic approach to suffer. The planning of the “Historic Route” influenced the establishment of natural heritage insofar as the distribution of resources goes. The Simien National Park was chosen as a focal point for these efforts as it was adjacent to the planned “Historic Route”, and promised to provide touristic potential because of the unique mountain-riff-scenery as well as the rare species present.<sup>570</sup>

Originally the project ETH 74/14 was titled “The Development of Cultural tourism: preservation and presentation of sites and monuments”<sup>571</sup> and with the new *raison d’être* of heritage sites as tourist destinations, the project qualified as one of the “sharper focus and greater impact potential [...] projects which are economic but which have maximum multiplier effects”<sup>572</sup> that UNDP tried to establish as a priority in Ethiopia. Although after a personal visit, the UNDP resident representative Alan Elliott was doubtful in internal correspondence about the realistic possibilities, in the official language of reports and requests and also correspondence with the Ethiopian authorities, the promotion of tourism was enthusiastically defended and fostered by UNDP and UNESCO representatives.<sup>573</sup> After the first several missions, UNESCO acknowledged that the government would need more assistance to “promote tourism and increase the value of cultural heritage and natural sites.”<sup>574</sup>

After the 1974 revolution, the government still desired the development of tourism, but its valuation shifted.<sup>575</sup> The declaration on “Economic Policy of Socialist Ethiopia by the Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia”, issued on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February, 1975, stated that, “It should, however, be emphasised that the conservation of wildlife, birdlife, etc. particularly of the rare species, and the preservation of the antiquities will be viewed primarily as national objectives in their own right and not only as a means of attracting foreign visitors.”<sup>576</sup> Although in the UNDP country programme for Ethiopia for the period 1983-86, the UNDP still stated “the high importance which the Ethiopian government

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<sup>570</sup> Gaidoni, “Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development,” 49.

<sup>571</sup> Project proposal, no date, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP, pt. i.

<sup>572</sup> Memo from E. Amerding, in: UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. i.

<sup>573</sup> Memo from A. Elliott to Director BMS, 21.1.69, UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. v.

<sup>574</sup> Memo from Director BMS to DG, October 1970, in: UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. vi.

<sup>575</sup> Eshete, *The Cultural Situation in Socialist Ethiopia*, 19.

<sup>576</sup> Quoted in: Ayalew Sisay, *Historical*, 162, 163.

accords to the dimension of culture in the development process"<sup>577</sup>, the development of heritages sites as destinations was no longer considered as important. In reality not only the re-orientation of the political paradigm, but mainly the ongoing political and military conflicts presented a strong inhibiting factor on all tourism activities. Travel bans and states of emergency made large parts of the "Historic North" inaccessible to foreigners for almost a decade. In the years between 1983 and 1988, the tourism sector had a very low priority, as over a third of the national budget was allocated to defence and internal security. The nationalisation of all private hotels, tour operators and agencies prevented any possibility of foreign private investment. Furthermore, tourism suffered from the continuous lack of infrastructure and from insufficient marketing.<sup>578</sup>

UNESCO and UNDP representatives attempted to adapt the project guidelines to the new political directions and paradigms of a new administration which refused to see culture as complimentary or to be simply employed in the service of tourism and economic development, and emphasised how "for the preservation of cultural heritage, in this context a development of cultural identity would provide important guidelines for economic development, in which tourism components were not vital, but would be a result."<sup>579</sup>

### **Turning the heritage sites into destinations**

While the development of tourism never did accomplish what had been predicted in the 1960s, the promotion of tourism, and its scientific counterpart, expert evaluation, were however of major importance in helping create an image of Ethiopia.

Experts agreed early on that any planning had to revolve around creating a strong image of Ethiopia that would have a specific appeal to tourists. As with Vojislav Popovic, B. Gaidoni stated that "the first and most urgent task in the process of building a tourist industry in Ethiopia must be the creation and diffusion of the tourist image of the country." He sketched out:

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<sup>577</sup> Letter from J.B. Kabore, to Mr. K.F.S. King, UNESCO 069:72 (63) UNDP pt. ixb.

<sup>578</sup> The independence of Eritrea resulted in the loss of some of the most promising tourist destinations along the Red Sea coast, Frederick A. Frost and Tekle Shanka, "Perception of Ethiopia as a Tourist Destination," *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective: Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies*, 1997, 348-50 until the the 90s, the brochures from the 60s and 70s presented the only tourism promotion material available and they are today still sold at souvenir stalls at the tourist destinations, supposedly because no new ones exist in sufficient quantity.

<sup>579</sup> Draft report of the tripartite meeting from 27.1.1978, Project ETH 74/014, in: UNESCO 069:72(63) UNDP pt. vi.

First, like Egypt, Ethiopia has its own unique architectural and historical reality, with sites like Gondar, Axum, and Lalibela as outstanding tourist offerings. Secondly, like Kenya, Ethiopia boasts the wildlife resources of its national parks, Awash, Simien, and Bale. Lastly, Ethiopia betters either Egypt or Kenya with its sunshine and sea beauty, Massawa, the Dahlak Islands, and in general the Red Sea coast. This Ethiopia can offer a triple image, but because Ethiopia is also an African country, this image must be thoroughly African. What I mean is this. Even if Ethiopia is building modern cities and new industrial enterprises, it has to offer the tourist points of interest he does not find at home, be that in Europe or North America. It is this other world image which must be established to attract the attention of the prospective tourist. The proper tourist image, then, is the first thing an ETO team of experts should establish.<sup>580</sup>

The establishment of tourism as a state economic sector had a strong impact on both image production and the circulation of knowledge of Ethiopian heritage. In order to attract foreign investment and to promote Ethiopia as tourist destination on the international market, two government institutions were responsible with developing tourism marketing concepts and campaigns: EAL and the ETO. Both institutions received foreign technical assistance and foreign advisors contributed significantly to the production and planning of tourism images and slogans. Tourism promotion experts from Germany, the UK and France, funded via bilateral programmes of technical cooperation, worked for the ETO, developing tourism promotional materials that would advertise the benefits of Ethiopia in the language of Western commercial advertising.<sup>581</sup> EAL's early tourism promotion already operated with catchy slogans, such as "The Wonderland Route" or "The Land of Queen of Sheba", alluding to the Western fascination with Ethiopian heritage and history.<sup>582</sup>

The director of the ETO was Habte Selassie Tefesse, formerly head of the press and information department of the Ethiopian Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and head of Tourism in the Prime Minister's Office. He received his primary education and socialisation growing up in Athens as the foster child of a Russian Orthodox Christian family, and his secondary education in Alexandria, Egypt, where his Ethiopian birth father served as

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<sup>580</sup> Gaidoni, "Ethiopia - Cultural Tourism: Prospects for Its Development," 7.

<sup>581</sup> At least six full-time advisors, two of which were responsible for the development of publicity, over a duration of several years, are listed in the following reports: UNDP, "Report on Development Assistance to Ethiopia in 1972 - Prepared by the Resident Representative of the UNDP in Ethiopia," 41, 42; UNDP, "Report on Development Assistance to Ethiopia in 1973" (Addis Ababa: Office of the Regional Representative of UNDP, April 25, 1974), 46, 47.

<sup>582</sup> Pamphlets, in NALE 1.2.18.01, Ethiopian Airlines.

ambassador for Ethiopia. He received his higher education in the USA.<sup>583</sup> He brought a decidedly Western, state-of-the-art expertise, and sense for marketing and image promotion to all areas of government publications directed towards a foreign audience.<sup>584</sup> After the establishment of the ETO in 1966, a full-scale marketing strategy was developed under his direction, including the slogans “The hidden empire” and “13 months of sunshine”, which referred to the Ethiopian use of the Julian calendar as opposed to the Gregorian one, resulting in an additional month<sup>585</sup> and implying, in the marketing copy, not only the benefits of a consistently mild and sunny climate throughout the year, but also that for the tourist more was to be found than expected in Ethiopia.<sup>586</sup> Habte Selassie also created Ethiopian Pavilions for the World Expositions in Montreal in 1967 and in Japan in 1972, as well as regularly showcasing Ethiopia at the Internationale Tourismus-Börse (ITB) in Berlin. Part of this strategy was image production that established and curated the sites of cultural and natural heritage as touristic destinations. These images were orientated to reflect the Western tourist gaze on Ethiopia, focussing on exoticised images of “ethnic” faces and singling out monuments.<sup>587</sup>

For the planning of tourism in Ethiopia, the establishment of a portfolio of historic sites along the “Historic Route” was firmly connected to the belief that only these sites held enough potential to attract larger number of tourists, deemed a necessity to onset the general touristic development of Ethiopia.<sup>588</sup> After the overall tourist development plan from 1969, another plan was commissioned a US-consulting firm, selecting that tourism investment and development should be concentrated on the “Historic Route” for the decade 1970-1980, and be connected to the establishment of a chain of eight first-class hotels along the “Historic Route”.<sup>589</sup> The “Historic Route” formed the core of the marketing strategies of both EAL and the ETO, which published numerous pamphlets, books, posters and brochures. More than thirty different pamphlets, dedicated to individual places or activities of touristic interest, demonstrate the broad scope that tourism development enjoyed for a brief period: guides for day trips from Addis, fishing, camping, diving,

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<sup>583</sup> He spoke Greek, English, French and Russian but was not a native Amharic speaker.

<sup>584</sup> Interview between Arefayne Fantahun and Habte Selassie Tafesse, May 2016 in Addis Ababa, notes kindly provided to me by Arefaynie Fantahun; Habte Selassie, “Tourism.”

<sup>585</sup> To balance out the leap year.

<sup>586</sup> Ethiopian Tourist Organisation, *13 Monate Sonnenschein in Äthiopien*, 1971.

<sup>587</sup> The images of the posters to the thirteen month campaign were and are widely popular and can still be found serving as decoration in Ethiopian restaurants of present days. Personally, I have seen them in every Ethiopian restaurant I have visited so far, in Berlin, London and Oakland, CA. Furthermore, in facebook-groups dedicated to sharing historical photos of Ethiopia, these images are frequently shown and continue to circulate.

<sup>588</sup> Angelini and Mougín, “Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism,” 5; Grimwood, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources,” 6.

<sup>589</sup> Ayalew Sisay, *Historical*, 110-12; Ethiopian Tourist Organisation and PPR International, London, *Ethiopia - Opportunity for Investment in a New Chain of Tourist Hotels*, no date.

white-water rafting, as well as pottery, jewellery and wild flowers.<sup>590</sup> For the period of two years, a monthly newspaper, *Tourist News*, was published by the ETO in English and French (as *nouvelles touristiques*), containing a rotating stock of articles about the main sights as well as changes in current information.<sup>591</sup> At the core of the promotional material remained the “Historic Route” or the “Historic North” and most of the guide books published are decorated on the cover with isolated, iconic images of the classic heritage sites in Lalibela, Axum, Gondar and Simien, or contain a map of Ethiopia assembled of nothing but the images of the main heritage sites.

Experts of the “Institut” as well as of the CRCCH and the EWCO contributed texts and images towards the production of the brochures and travel guides published by the ETO, such as the brochure *Big Game*, which was produced in collaboration with John Blower—who served as the director of EWC—or *Ancient Sites of Northern Ethiopia*, which included texts by Francis Anfray, archaeologist at the “Institut”.<sup>592</sup> Within just a few years, a world of images of Ethiopia was created that helped to manifest the key tropes of ancient empire and isolated natural beauty as icons representing Ethiopian history and heritage. This gave experts a double function, turning them, in addition to their expert role, into mediators of knowledge to an interested, educated Western public. A particularly vivid example is the round trips organised by the British Swan Tours in 1972-73. Four “special interest tours” altogether were taking place in Ethiopia, with renowned scholars of Ethiopian studies accompanying the tours as guides—Richard and Rita Pankhurst, historians and political activists for the Ethiopian cause, two key figures for the scientific and political development of Ethiopia in the twentieth century. Other tours were guided by Sir Patrick Kirwan, a British archaeologist who had undertaken research in Axum among other sites in the Horn of Africa, and the historian Edward Ullendorf.<sup>593</sup>

### **Moving heritage to the government’s centre stage: tourism and development planning**

The gravitational influence of development aid and expected tourist revenue re-structured and re-aligned the national heritage landscape of Ethiopia, whereby in addition to the economic aspect, heritage-making also served varied political agendas. Devel-

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<sup>590</sup> A complete list of all examples found during my research is attached in Appendix I.

<sup>591</sup> Ethiopia Tourist News, Monthly Publication of the Ethiopian Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism and *ethiopie nouvelles touristiques*, Publication Mensuelle du Ministère Ethiopien du Commerce, Industrie et Tourisme.

<sup>592</sup> John Blower, *Big Game in Ethiopia: Hunting and Photographic Safaris in Africa’s Newest Game Country* (Addis Ababa: Ethiopian Tourist Organization, 1974); Ethiopian Tourist Organisation and Francis Anfray, eds., *Ancient Sites of Northern Ethiopia*, 1967.

<sup>593</sup> Swan (Hellenic) LTD, 1972-73 special interest tours of Ethiopia, 15.6.72, in: SOAS Kirwan papers, Box 4, 3-70.

oping tourism in Ethiopia was as much motivated by economic prospects as it was by the outlook of creating a strong, world-wide iconography of success. The proponents of tourism predicted that “the time will come when the Ethiopian Tourist Organization will be proud of [...] being the sole organization to succeed in moving Ethiopia into the channels of world economy, in order to operate wherein any country must first of all be known.”<sup>594</sup>

The use of symbolic images of monumental and natural heritage sites in Ethiopia is impressively visible in the first tourism campaigns and in general government representation in the years following the Italian occupation period and the subsequent years of recovery, development and modernisation. The “Historic Route” and maps of “Greater Ethiopia” were used to install a dominant historical narrative. Images of heritage were condensed into a strong iconography of national heritage, utilised to foster national identity and serve as an important tool for governance and representation. In the Ethiopian imperial state, and likewise in the following military government and under the Derg, the use of selected historic sites served to create the image of a country that had a right to its claims of power and relevance in the international order, and likewise held the promise of developing into an economically strong nation.

The international heritage experts took the increased relevance derived from the touristic initiative to their advantage, and tried to argue that only with a properly set up scientific standard of conservation, as state responsibility, could the development of heritage-sites into destinations reap fruitful results. They were aware that “the Ethiopian Government [was] in no better position than other governments to devote large sums of money to conservation for ethical reasons alone”<sup>595</sup> and that conservation in its own right would remain a low-priority task in terms of budget allocation. In their report, Angelini and Mougin suggested a very detailed restructuring of the existing bureaucratic infrastructure of all authorities related to tourism. Realising that tourism concerned the responsibilities of nine Ministries altogether, they came to the conclusion that the ETO should be attached to the Prime Minister’s office, to sit near yet outside the necessary ministries.<sup>596</sup>

Because of the economic reasoning that tourism was necessary for development, heritage-making changed status from a relatively peripheral issue in the government’s responsibilities to a more central role, involving the Ministry of Planning. Tourism accelerated the process of heritage-making in Ethiopia significantly, with an emphasis on developing those aspects which were particularly relevant for connecting Ethiopian heritage to the concept of universal heritage. Angelini, in his work plan for the “Historic Route” insisted

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<sup>594</sup> ianus, *Organizzazione per gli studi e le ricerche die economia applicata - S. p. A., Ethiopian Tourist Development Plan*, 13.

<sup>595</sup> Grimwood, “Ethiopia - Conservation of Natural Resources,” 5.

<sup>596</sup> Angelini and Mougin, “Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism,” 31.



on an inventory of all heritage sites, like Howland, which was to be started in the “Historic Route” area.<sup>597</sup>

As a matter of fact it was only through the incentives provided by tourism that the conservation and heritage-making projects of UNESCO found an administrative counterpart in the Ethiopian government that would actualise certain projects towards implementation. After the input of all experts in the development of tourism, the “Historic Route” was given the highest priority by the Ministry of Development and Planning.<sup>598</sup> It is important to note that the missions of Angelini and Mougin (preparation of tourism development), Angelini (the “Historic Route”) as well as Gaidoni (tourism development) were not requested by the Ministry of Education or in context of the Antiquities Administration, but by the Planning Commission, which was in charge of the 5-year development plans and part of the Ministry of Development and Planning.<sup>599</sup> Tourism had turned the making of Ethiopian heritage into a development activity, which made it not only more relevant, but also supported the elaboration of those aspects of heritage-making that were particularly important to fulfil the criteria for World Heritage.

### **The tourist gaze: defining heritage on Western terms**

Next to an understanding of the technological and economic implications of tourism, it is equally important to realise that tourism is a distinctly modernist discourse, representative of changing worldviews and global-local relationships. Between the years 1960 and 1980, this discourse was deeply embedded within the reality of modern, post-industrial society. As explained earlier, other forms of society in earlier periods had variations of mass travel, the most prominent being pilgrimage, but only in the distinct setting of employed, industrial and post-industrial labour can travel be fully conceptualised as tourism. Tourism cannot be understood without the role of consumption in Western modern (and postmodern) society and without mentioning the relevance of the emerging concept of the world as an entity that is accessible to the individual subject. Since spending power existed mainly in Western countries, developing countries were marketed as destinations using images that would reflect the ideas of Western customers. Perceptions of these countries were shaped according to orientalist, exoticist ideas and UNESCO engaged and accelerated the production of these images with its cultural tourism missions and public-

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<sup>597</sup> Angelini, “Ethiopia - The Historic Route, A Work-Plan for the Development of the Sites and Monuments,” 13; Howland, “Ethiopia,” 3-5.

<sup>598</sup> Angelini and Mougin, “Ethiopia - Proposals for the Development of Sites and Monuments in Ethiopia as a Contribution to the Growth of Tourism,” 4.

<sup>599</sup> Letter from Belai Abbai to Malcolm Adiseshiah, 4.1.1968, UNESCO X 07.21 (63) pt. iv.

ity activities.<sup>600</sup> The type of tourism promoted by the UNESCO cultural tourism missions was related more to the historic origins of tourism from British and French upper class travels, Grand Tour, than to the mass tourism phenomenon and thus enhancing the discursive quality of heritage activities as a representation of a Western worldview.<sup>601</sup>

As regards UNESCO and the experts working as consultants on these missions, the tourism assistance offers a glimpse into the mechanics and workings of the international system during a crucial period of growth. Possessing an area of operations in the field of tourism development gave UNESCO a means to increase its influence and relevance. Carrying out these studies helped UNESCO and its commissioned experts to strengthen their role as producers and brokers of knowledge within the development discourse and beyond. It sheds light on the fact that international organisations like UNESCO and their international policies provided a hub for a multitude of interests, bestowing a label that could easily be appropriated in different ways by the different actors involved. As already stated, for many governments, one of the biggest immediate economic benefits of tourism development was its potential to open up further possibilities for accessing large scale infrastructural development funding.

Without the economic incentive of cultural tourism, no funding would have been available for developing countries to put into effect the conventions regarding heritage protection. Projects, such as the creation of inventories or scientific evaluation according to the elaborate standards of ICOMOS, would not have been possible through the existing development budgets of the Participation Programme, Funds in Trust or the World Heritage Fund. Larger projects, such as institutional development and legislation in Ethiopia, were necessary in many developing countries to meet even the basic requirements.<sup>602</sup>

Those projects were only possible because larger amounts of money could be redirected from development programmes such as the UNDP, Special Funds or the World Bank.

The final reports of the tourism missions all shared a deeply invasive way of looking at the countries, their people and their culture. In short, they approached the local cultures and national identities with a *tourist gaze*—the view of tourists on their surroundings, which is guided by a set of expectations in the tourists' minds, and objectifies people,

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<sup>600</sup> Nigel Morgan and Annette Pritchard, *Tourism Promotion and Power: Creating Images, Creating Identities* (Chichester, New York: Wiley, 1998), 165–67, 211, 212; Colin Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker, "Introduction," in *Tourism and Postcolonialism*, ed. Colin Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker (London: Routledge, 2014), 9, 10.

<sup>601</sup> Patrick Young, "A Place Like Any Other?: Publicity, Hotels and the Search for a French Path to Tourism," in *Touring Beyond the Nation: A Transnational Approach to European Tourism History*, ed. Eric G. E. Zuelow (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 130–32.

<sup>602</sup> see ch. 3; Terminal Report, ETH/74/014, 2.

places and cultural practices.<sup>603</sup> Through the tourism development missions, knowledge production within the context of the development decade was furnished with a particular dimension of touristic imagination.

The promotion of tourism relies on a consensual language used and comprehended between the producers and recipients of the promotional material.<sup>604</sup> Tourism, like heritage, necessitated a discussion about people, places and events in terms that would be understood by the major audience for tourism in the Western hemisphere, and consequently shaped local culture and nature into narratives and concepts that would fit into the Western worldview.<sup>605</sup> UNESCO and the other international actors involved were in charge of cultural production and the representation of cultural identities, providing meaning to how those cultures were seen everywhere else and acting as knowledge producers for national and cultural identities.

Like in Ethiopia, within many developing countries this imagery, and the paternalistic, and culturally and ecologically racist development ideologies behind the cultural tourism missions, were not far from the local ruling elites' perspective on the people living at sites of potential touristic interest, and the experts assessment of what constituted the country's most relevant history did not differ so much from the idea of those internationally connected and educated elites.<sup>606</sup>

From a long-term perspective, tourism missions did indeed create a long lasting destination value in many so-called developing countries, insofar as they had a significant impact on the evolution of national heritage conservation and the World Heritage Programme. Through their reports the consultants established and unlocked funding for collaboration and for expert activity in the heritage sector of many countries. In particular, this contributed significantly to the success of the World Heritage Programme in its early years, as many countries could provide at least some heritage sites that would meet the elaborate scientific standards required for a World Heritage nomination. Tourism missions represented a critical mass of activities that notably fostered the successful implementation of the World Heritage Convention by providing a stock of heritage sites ready for nomination as World Heritage. These sites had been restored and conserved in collaboration with UNESCO. Without all these preceding activities in cultural tourism, owing to the development decade, there would not have been so many sites already in the UNESCO system by the time the World Heritage Programme came into being.

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<sup>603</sup> Morgan and Pritchard, *Tourism*, 169; John Urry, *The tourist gaze: leisure and travel in contemporary societies* (London: Sage, 1990), 1-3, 110-12.

<sup>604</sup> Stuart Hall, *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi: Sage Publua, 1997), 13-24.

<sup>605</sup> Nash, "Tourism as a Form of Imperialism," 45, 46.

<sup>606</sup> Keith Hollinshead, "Tourism and New Sense: Worldmaking and the Enunciative Value of Tourism," in *Tourism and Postcolonialism*, ed. Colin Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker (New York: Routledge, 2004), 38, 39.



## Conclusion

This thesis has posed the question of what role the so-called developing countries had in the historic genesis of the World Heritage Programme. My research project, which took as a starting point the curiously high number of Ethiopian nominations offered in response to the first call for nominations the World Heritage List in 1978, investigated in depth the case of the first Ethiopian World Heritage sites. Firstly, I outlined how UNESCO practiced heritage-making based upon a Western tradition, and as a development activity in line with the organisation's universalist ideological foundation. In a second step I introduced the specific quality of the relationship between UNESCO and the Ethiopian Government, characterised by a reciprocal interest that largely arose in the Development Decade, and by an increasing productivity in terms of operational projects during the 1960s to 1980s. The detailed insights provided, regarding tensions and problems arising from the collaboration, laid the groundwork for a better understanding of the third chapter, in which I outlined the story of Ethiopian heritage as international heritage, based on Western ideas and on particular images of Ethiopia, and implemented as a governing strategy during the modern imperial period. UNESCO enhanced and accelerated this process by connecting it to larger international expert networks. To further underline the role in Ethiopia of heritage making as a political tool, the fourth chapter illustrated the process of internal and external politicisation of heritage and provided the necessary context for understanding the socio-political impacts of the international heritage-making in Ethiopia in the late 1970s. The fifth and last chapter demonstrated that it was only through tourism development that the heritage-making projects became enabled, actualised and implemented, as distinct development activities concerning both the cultural and the economic spheres. Developing heritage, it becomes very clear, was part of the process of developing countries. Yet, rather than balancing out technocratic planning exercises with cultural and social aspects, heritage-making added increased political weight to development politics, reproducing exclusive means of representation and determining an image production, the intention of which was to ensure that developing countries would not lose their face on the international stage.

Beginning in the 1960s and following the emergence of agendas in the arena of international heritage, formed both under UNESCO's roof and within the sphere of Ethiopian national heritage that had become a state domain, the project traced the networks and actors involved, and revealed driving forces and continuities. In focusing on the administrative aspect of institutionalised heritage-making, the role of different political and expert actors, and heritage-making as both a discourse and practice, the analysis connects

existing historiographies of the UN system, of World Heritage and African heritage, and of modern Ethiopia, and arrives at the following findings:

### **1. The development decade shaped the concept of World Heritage**

The technocratic, expert-led ideology of the internationalism of the 1950s paved the way for heritage-making as a development activity in UNESCO's programme and it was through the development impetus that heritage ultimately turned from a discourse into a widespread international practice of heritage-making. Between the foundation in the 1940s and the commencement of the World Heritage Programme in the 1970s, UNESCO evolved from a more intellectual orientation into an organisation that expanded its actions into an operational dimension. The two decades between 1960 and 1980 marked the peak of UNESCO's operational action, meaning that during the 60s and 70s assistance could be given to developing countries in the area of heritage-making, and this provided the international heritage and conservation discourses with an opportunity to develop a heritage practice. In this regard, World Heritage, despite its strong idealistic underpinning, was conceptualised as an active, *making* process and not just a passive, *declaring* one. Hand-in-hand with the different conceptual strands interwoven in the World Heritage Convention, the idea was conceived of providing assistance to certain state parties to develop the necessary administrative prerequisites, a fact which constitutes a crucial element of heritage-making. The World Heritage List marked a culmination point of conservation activities in developing countries, and existing attempts to understand the historic genesis of World Heritage do not account enough for the institutional transformation of UNESCO in the context of decolonisation and the first UN development decade.

### **2. UNESCO's heritage-making helped to materialise the global dimension of "the international" in the developing world**

UNESCO's conservation activities demonstrate how much the internationalist discourse was rooted in the Western historiographic discourse. In Ethiopia and other countries, international heritage experts identified and cared for the national heritage and helped establish it on an international level. The systematising effort of defining World Heritage operationalised the universalist claim of UNESCO and was a hegemonial act of inclusion, and it follows that World Heritage is also the story of existing territories being overwritten with a unifying internationalist version of world history. By defining natural and cultural heritage sites, like in Ethiopia, in terms of familiarity and difference, heritage sites in developing countries were integrated in this world history, aestheticised and disconnected from their locally embedded context.

As a matter of fact, both the internationalist project and the newly emerging nation states of the developing world were in acute need of historical narratives that could strengthen and fully form their respective young identities. UNESCO's role as global heritage-making authority developed further in the 1960s because it promoted the identity discourses that underwrote the construction of national narratives, a major political currency for many of these states. Defining real places of world, expressed through places of national history, was thus an inevitable process for both national as well as the international authorities. Heritage making provided an opportunity to individual newly forming nations to be part of the internationalist project and to connect to wider frameworks, in particular to programmes where, in terms of representation, they would not specifically be singled out as developing countries.

Long before the World Heritage Convention in 1972 and the World Heritage List in 1978 took shape, many future World Heritage sites in the developing world had surfaced as part of UNESCO's conservation activities. The cooperation between the Ethiopian government and UNESCO, in matters of heritage-making, began more than fifteen years before the World Heritage nominations were submitted and was based on research connections extending back more than a century. During the 1960s and 1970s, Ethiopian heritage served as an essential as testing ground for broadening the application of a specific Western concept of conservation that eventually became the global standard through the World Heritage convention. An understanding of the historic genesis of the World Heritage Programme has to include the actual sites where UNESCO was involved in conservation projects prior to 1972.

### **3. Constructing the image of "Greater Ethiopia" was a common interest of the Ethiopian government and international heritage experts**

Ethiopian World Heritage Sites expressed a version of the international order in which the developing countries that adapted best into the Western categories for superiority were resituated as powerful, legitimate state actors. The selected Ethiopian sites for the "Historic Route" and the World Heritage nominations underwrote existing national and international narratives of Ethiopian supremacy. Only through this understanding was it possible in contemporary Western historical thinking to locate culture and history in Ethiopia, a necessity for UNESCO's, IUCN's, and ICOMOS' authentication of Ethiopian heritage as World Heritage. Three key narratives of the Western world could be localised in Ethiopia: the narrative of human evolution, the very source of the imagined community of humankind, localised in the Lower Valley of the Omo, and the narratives of Christianity and Empire, both as gatekeepers of civilisation and localised in the other Ethiopian sites. The exception of natural heritage in the Simien National Park was in turn described in a lan-

guage that implied a European resemblance in its geographical features, argued for as being similar to Alpine nature and therefore readable as having outstanding value.

This image of Ethiopia was precisely what made heritage-making of interest to the Ethiopian government, which had long fostered expressions of a continuity of advanced civilisation and Empire, as well as Ethiopia's unique status in Africa. In both the Ethiopian imperial state and during the subsequent military government under the socialist Derg, the use of selected historic sites served to create an image of a country that had a right to its claims of power and relevance in the international order. This "front-end" representation of Ethiopian national identity was complemented and utilised by people working on the "back-end" of the bureaucracy, to establish material sites of heritage. UNESCO's engagement in heritage-making in Ethiopia linked to and legitimised the dominant "Greater Ethiopia" discourse from an outside perspective. The Ethiopian sites while providing the classic markers of Western authenticity, at the same time could be affiliated with the developing world and Africa, representing UNESCO's global reach.

#### **4. The early establishment of heritage making as a development activity is the reason for the politicised character of World Heritage**

The paternalistic development-aid-for-nation-building approach of the 1960s produced many of the problems related to World Heritage that subsequently emerged in the following decades, as it put heritage-making as a government instrument at the hands of states in the process of nation-building. In order to connect individual countries to universal heritage, it was necessary to institutionalise the decisive heritage-producing authority, which replaced in many cases other existing social institutions such as oral traditions or religious practices—a fact that was overwhelmingly in the interest of weak national governments in need of promoting a centralised national identity. Since heritage-related knowledge not only consisted of one-dimensional data such as statistical results or economic models, but also of historical narratives, images and maps, it carried a highly emotional value, and additionally promised a potential increase in governance through territorial control. As demonstrated in the case of Ethiopia, these aspects contributed to the uptake of conservation principles in many developing countries, and furnished them with a politicised dimension. Through recourse to the allegedly superior Western practice of heritage-making, a build up of bureaucratic institutions and processes could be promoted in a way that would ensure continued control and the maintenance of power.

International experts named, classified and analysed the heritage sites and monuments in question, undertook standardising efforts, drafted policies and legal recommendations, and developed management and master plans— in short their influence was immense,



especially on the institutional and administrative levels. This influence, in Ethiopia, translated in turn into a national hegemony towards regional political forces and ethnic groups. Because heritage was introduced as a political and economic resource and a superimposed cultural practice, it often had a detrimental or marginalising effect on local culture.

#### **5. The connection of heritage-making to the larger cash-flows of development investment through tourism provided the deciding momentum for actualising World Heritage sites**

Through the connection to tourism development, World Heritage was attached to substantial cash flows of UN development aid programmes and this transformed heritage into an economic resource for developing countries. Conservation of natural and cultural heritage, according to the international conventions created from the 1950s onwards under UNESCO's roof, was an expensive enterprise, technically as well as financially. The community of international heritage-experts was very aware of that fact, and conceived early on of the idea to generate necessary revenue through the monuments.

Due to the specific decision processes already in place for international funding and assistance for tourism-linked conservation projects, by the time the World Heritage list took more concrete shape the exercise of selecting a representative ensemble of sites was a very practised one in many countries. Fundamentally, it can be seen that the dependence of international heritage-making efforts on tourism meant that the idea of World Heritage was shaped by tourist-thinking and imaginaries to a considerable extent.

My work presents a critical position in the existing research on the World Heritage Programme, challenging previous works that focus on the intellectual background of the concept or the impact of World Heritage on the ground alone. It is essential to understand that heritage, in the historic genesis of the World Heritage Programme, was approached from a development angle, giving it a technocratic, resource-generating, problem-solving quality, and this focus lent heritage the function of constructing national identity in an international context. Hence, my research shows that the actual heritage-making process took place largely in international and national bureaucratic spheres, and demonstrates how the role of developing countries, and the development paradigm, has to date been underestimated in the historic genesis of the World Heritage Programme.

In this, my work contributes to the existing literatures on UNESCO, illustrating the requirement to further investigate UNESCO as a knowledge producing authority and demonstrating that the role of foreign experts in the bureaucratisation and evolution of the institutional landscape in developing countries deserves a deeper investigation. Con-

servation and heritage-making efforts of UNESCO, despite their enlightened, idealistic mission, continued to produce knowledge about Africa, and about African history and heritage, in a Western framework. As such I also understand my work as a contribution to the African and Ethiopian historiographical debate, supporting the view that the re-writing of African and Ethiopian history during the 1960s and 1970s was essentially orientated along a Western discourse. This kind of historiographic effort did not initially emancipate African history and identity on its own terms, and it supported nation-building in favour of the political elites.

The story of how the Ethiopian World Heritage sites were developed as an international effort shows that it is absolutely necessary to critically question activities for conserving and safeguarding cultural and natural heritage, as they continue to be connected to a characteristic hierarchy of knowledge production in a development context. Processes of heritage-making, like all knowledge production that is monopolised as a state domain, should be questioned in regards to context, motives, actors and goals. In light of the recent political conflicts related to ethnic identities in Ethiopia, certainly, more detailed research regarding the geopolitics of Ethiopian heritage-making should be pursued.

My work also contributes to the field of heritage studies and supports the view that heritage today can serve as an analytical frame in understanding socio-political realities and relations—in particular regarding the discursive quality of heritage linked to the question of power-relationships and representation—but insists that bureaucratic procedures and actors need to be taken into account more for critical heritage analysis. This same emphasis makes my work a contribution to the field of tourism studies, suggesting that questions of cultural representation, and the detrimental effects of heritage sites as tourism destinations, are not merely an economical ones but also highly political in nature, as they concern the production of images and controlled modes of representation.

My work adds to existing literatures on the development discourse by highlighting the fact that aspects of heritage, culture, and identity were also influenced and transformed by development thinking, and additionally by suggesting that an examination of the academic and cultural background of international experts is crucial to better understanding their practical work and decision making. The belief that proper development should extend to all areas of government duties and beyond was widespread among both politicians and experts alike during the 1960s. Development was routinely practised with attached chauvinism, driven by tenets that the population in developing countries required education in all matters of successful living, and any effort to write a history of development needs to pay more attention to the aspects beyond economics, politics and humanitarian aid. The fact that development activities during the first UN Development

Decade encompassed heritage-making demonstrates how the discourse and practice of developmental aid unfolded a pervasive potential, impacting broadly on social and political spheres for decades. In tying together different stories, like those told here of the Ethiopian World Heritage sites, historiographies revealing the deeper layers of global processes emerge at, perhaps, unexpected places, such as in the offices of the CRCCH, where an Iranian archaeologist, a Swedish architect-restorer, French archaeologists and an Ethiopian historian would collaboratively draft the Ethiopian World Heritage nominations for the cultural heritage sites.

The connections between UNESCO's early activities in conservation in so-called developing countries, and the Western tradition of conservation that formed the ideological and conceptual backbone of the World Heritage Convention, are, I argue, key in understanding the politicised character of the World Heritage Programme. However, beyond this, my research points out that more general attention should be given to the role of developing countries when we study the implementation and impact of existing global policies. Contrary to the development discourse, the range of different institutional and personal actor perspectives presented in this history argue against approaching the global West-development nexus as a hierarchical structure. My research findings allow for a diversified understanding of both the development and heritage discourse alike and, perhaps most importantly, elucidate the strategic perspective of so-called developing countries regarding development and international organisations.

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## Appendix I: ETO Publications

Title	Year	Format	Publisher	Place of Publication	Author	Language
13 Monate Sonnenschein in Äthiopien	1971	Booklet	ETO	Frankfurt/Main	Winter, B.	Ger
Big Game in Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Blower, John	Eng
Ethiopia's Hidden Route	1984	Magazine	ETO	Addis Ababa	Last, Jill	Eng
Ethiopian Pottery	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Cassiers, Anne	Eng
Lalibela	1967	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Endemic Mammals of Ethiopia	1982	Brochure	Ethiopian Tourism Commission	Addis Ababa	Last, Jill	Eng
Gondar, Ethiopia	N.Y.	Pamphlet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Makelle, Ethiopia - Gateway to Rockhewn Churches of Tigray	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Ethiopia: One to Two Days from Addis Ababa	1980	Brochure	ETO	Addis Ababa	Last, Jill	Eng
Omo Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	unknown	Shatto, Ted	Eng
Hotels	N.Y.	Brochure	ETO	unknown	N.A.	Eng
Ethiopia's Rift Valley Lakes	1974	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Maness, Hilda	Eng
Tour of Northern Ethiopia	1967	Brochure	ETO	Addis Ababa	Uhlenbroek, Carol	Eng
High Semyen, Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	unknown	unknown	Crook, John	Eng
Key to Tourism in Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Lalibela, Ethiopia	N.Y.	Magazine	ETO	Addis Ababa	Hecht, E.D.	Eng
Ethiopia: Matara, Senafe	N.Y.	Pamphlet	unknown	unknown	N.A.	Eng
Simyen: the Roof of Africa	1977	Magazine	ETO	Addis Ababa	Drake, Ellis	Eng
The Caves of Sof Omar	1968	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Clapham, C.S., Robson, Eric	Eng
Welcome to Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Rasmussen, Joel	Eng
Shell Guide: Addis Ababa / Moyale	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Shatto, Ted	Eng
Ethiopia - Jewellery	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Moore, Eine	Eng
Ethiopia - Arba Minch	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Ethiopia - Dahlak Islands	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Ethiopie - 13 mois de soleil	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Fr
Ethiopia - Lake Tana	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Ethiopia - Omo	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Ancient Sites of Northern Ethio-	1967	Booklet	unknown	unknown	Anfray, Francis	Eng

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Bird's Eye View of Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	Associated Enterprises Ltd.	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Axum	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Kotler, Neil	Eng
The High Se-myen: Roof of Africa	1967	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Crook, John	Eng
Gondar	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Doresse, Jean	Fr
Axum Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Kotler, Neil	Eng
Ethiopian Pottery	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Cassiers, Anne	Eng
Hunting in Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	Wildlife Conservation Organization	Addis Ababa	Wildlife Conservation Organization	Eng
Ethiopie - Lalibela	1976	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Fr
Massawa - Ethiopia, the Hidden Empire	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Eng
Omo Ethiopia	N.Y.	Booklet	ETO	Addis Ababa	Shatto, Ted	Eng
The Walia Ibex	N.Y.	Pamphlet	ETO	Addis Ababa	N.A.	Amh, Eng